

# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 38 – Number 6

October 2020

**Take a Look at What's In This Issue**  
13 New Feature Articles from  
Barn Boats to Master Craftsman  
16 Regular Features from Commentary to Shiver Me Timbers  
46 Advertisers from Artful Sailor to Woodcraft Supply



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## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

It's September 1st as I write this and the "summer that wasn't" is about over, with promised upcoming fall activities of all kinds now being cancelled as the covid pandemic rolls on. After the initial impact of the onset of the pandemic last March had passed, some optimism was regained by the public ("hope springs eternal") so upcoming scheduled events were postponed to later in the season, but as the months passed by and the pandemic continued, these postponements became cancellations. Our small boat activities are but a tiny part of the nation's summer recreation, but their absence has been meaningful to those of us who enjoy the fellowship denied to us by the social distancing policy adopted as a stop-gap while we await medical science coming up with a solution to the pandemic.

For those of us not seriously impacted by the pandemic (not sick and still at our everyday work or play) our boating carries on alone afloat or in the shop or with small groups of friends or family similarly not too troubled about becoming infected. In the absence of now banned gatherings to which the public is invited, informal socializing carries on apace. The key to so doing is to avoid bringing together too many people into too close company (that 6' apart thing).

On page 9 of this issue New Hampshire's Gundalow Company tells us how they were able to hold their 10th Annual Round Island Regatta, essentially a fleet of small boats racing on a river, obviously not crowding together and with no followup celebratory festival bringing all taking part together in too close company. And on the following pages 10 and 11, in "The Port of Brattleboro," we read of six people in four steamboats having a nice weekend cruising together on the Connecticut River. I'd guess there were

many, many more such informal gatherings nationwide that we do not hear about.

Winter will most likely bring as yet unknown disruption to our everyday lives, with activities normally enjoyed going indoors where, under current policy, it will be just about impossible to have any sizeable gatherings due to space and human behavior limitations. Even local club meetings are being cancelled. Some are adopting the artificial "Zoom" online substitute in which the essence of human companionship is absent, replaced by electronic talking images. I don't see those of us who mostly just indulge ourselves winters working in our shops on whatever boat project is at hand being too inconvenienced by the outside world's restraints on what we do and where we do it.

During this now summer past I have been out paddling my kayak and cycling (on my recumbent trike) with small groups of friends and have not missed the larger gatherings, which I have not been attending anyway in recent years due to travel issues (time, distance and expense). While my shop time is zero in summer anyway, I do intend to return to my Old Town project come cold weather.

Looking ahead I already see announcements from some of the events shut down this year advising us that, "We'll be back in 2021, better than ever!" Let's hope so but I am not counting on it. Better to make my own plans for what I will get to do within the existing circumstances when the time comes.

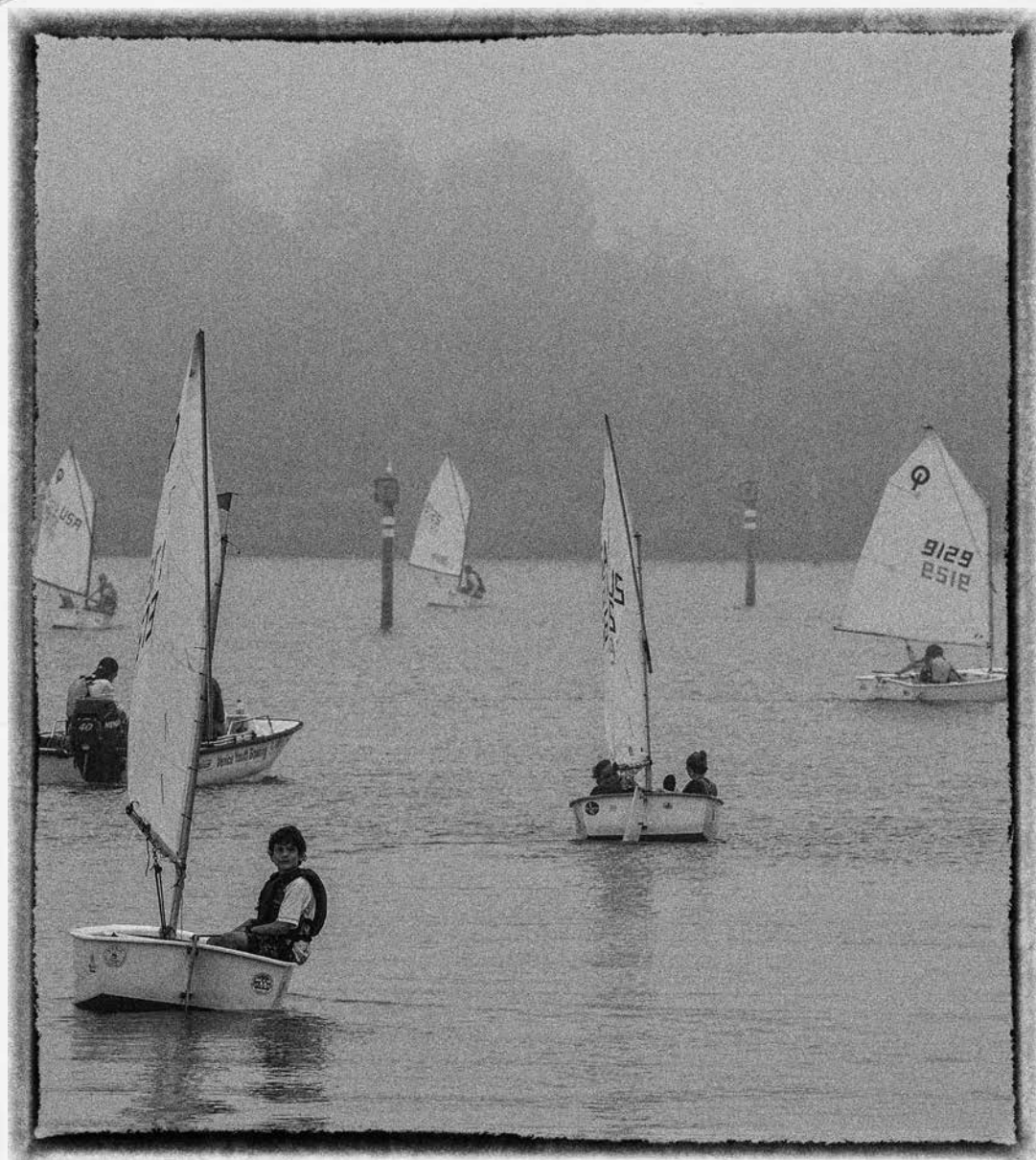
If the spirit moves you as this season winds down, tell us how you messed about in boats during this disruption in our lives. A selection of solutions to enjoying life during the great pandemic scare of 2020 would make for some good reading in upcoming winter issues.

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## On the Cover...

This 1901 photo of the Oxner & Story Shipyard in Essex, MA, illustrates a comment made in the accompanying text about how little infrastructure was needed to build a Gloucester fishing schooner back in the day. The Essex Shipbuilding Museum's Christopher Steplar has been sharing such old time photos from the museum archives with us over the past couple of issues and I thought it about time one made it onto the cover. More can be seen on pages 30-31.



## *Harkening Back With Harvey*

*"Small craft images from today as viewed through a long ago lens"*

*Images by Harvey Petersiel*

*"The Vikings are coming... the Vikings are coming!"*



## You write to us about...

### This Magazine...

#### Discovering *Messing About in Boats*

The letter that follows is from a friend who is an old salt of the highest order, sent to me in response to my mailing him a recent issue of *MAIB*. It was his first acquaintance with the magazine and his reaction was euphoric. He comments on several articles and offers, in return, personal experiences that are relevant:

"I had planned a day of working. At breakfast I eagerly opened your envelope. The publication is 60 pages long. The articles are fascinating. So much for much of the day. The more I read the more I wanted to read. It trapped me in its fierce grip.

There was even an article about Crosby. My grandfather and some others got together and had Crosby build the Crosby Megansett Class Knockabouts, as I recall 11 were made. They are amazingly well suited to the waters of Buzzards Bay. We often read about some guy and other members of his family based on waters of Long Island who became famous designing and building sailboats, but it is rare to read about Crosby who was based on Cape Cod. It was a thrill.

The story about Essex boat builders reminded me of an adventure I had. There is a famous clam shack well up in the marshes of Essex beside a numbered highway. I was invited to join a small group on a commercial trawler that went up the salt streams through the marsh to this clam shack on the highest high tide of the summer. There were Summer Theater actresses, commercial fishermen and other assorted distinguished guests and bums.

Never having done this before and not being responsible for the vessel, I brought a substantial supply of made up gin and tonics (it being a hot summer day). I was wrong in assuming others might not bring supplies, but correct in the end because my added supplies were helpful. An immediate problem developed in that the head malfunctioned. No problem. The captain put a bucket in the bilge for the women to use.

We touched bottom a few times as we made our way through the confusing maze of channels in the marsh and finally reached the famous clam shack. I tied the boat off to a highway guardrail at the end of a culvert. We went ashore and each bought what they wanted from the clam shack, hung out for awhile, boarded, hauled in the two 2"x12" planks that served as a gangway and cast off.

The captain then proceeded to turn his dragger around in the marsh channel that seemed narrower than the boat was long. When the boat was perpendicular to the shore it was clear that the channel was a bit wider than the boat was long. He would plant his bow on one side, put

the helm hard over and go ahead on it. The stern would kick around a little. He would back off a bit, then go ahead and do it again. In a remarkably short time he had that big trawler turned around. His skill at knowing his boat's capabilities and limits was memorable.

Also memorable were the Summer Theater actresses in their totally inappropriate outfits (including big, floppy broad brimmed hats) standing beautifully at the bow. Some of these actresses were every bit as impressive as the figureheads on a clipper ship.

One aspect of the articles that I enjoyed was many of the authors' inclinations to have large sail area for the vessel. The mainsail on *Cade* (my Pearson 32) had three reefs possible and I have used them all. I also had a 130% roller furling jib. It was a thrill to run before a good breeze with the jib whisker poled out to windward and the cruising spinnaker drawing well to leeward with the main doing its thing and surfing down the face of the waves. I also had a 90% jib, which I used quite a bit, and a storm jib which I never needed to use (thank goodness).

Reading the articles reminded me that I had always planned to add a removable bowsprit from which to fly the 90% jib when conditions were just right to do it. The boat had a bit of a weather helm so this would balance it nicely. Reading the articles of how folks did what they were thinking about to their boats, it made me keenly aware of the fact that I had not done that (and it would have been easy and fun to do).

I have known for many years that the Portuguese were secretly fishing the Grand Banks decades before anyone else knew about it. I did not know, and it was fascinating to read about it, how the Indians were involved. Gosh, that was a super story. I also have a great interest in the Vikings and their doings in North America. There is not that much time between the latest of the Vikings and the earliest of the Portuguese.

Of course, disagreeing with some comment made in a publication is not uncommon to those of us with some experience and the fixed opinions of old age. In this case I am referring to one writer (apologies if he is your friend) who suggested staggered oarlocks so your hands could overlap on the oars. I have done a lot of rowing (including crew at college). It is essential to have both oarlocks even so your shoulders remain square as you pull through the stroke.

Also, I was taught to always feather your oars (twist them so the blades are horizontal to the water as you bend forward for the next stroke). It makes a big difference if you are rowing into the wind and saves you some discomfort if rowing in really rough water. In my case, it also made it easier when I went to college and rowed on the crew.

The lost art is sculling. When I was a kid many of the skiffs had a half moon raised stern with a cutout for an oar. A man would stand and use a fairly long oar and

scull out to his boat using a sort of figure 8 motion with the oar."

From Harold Wolfson, Larchmont, NY

### Information Wanted...

#### Voartex Drop-In Rowing Rig

Thank you for advertising my request for a Wilderness Rowing Concepts Voartex drop-in rowing rig in your Classifieds in June and July. Unfortunately I didn't get any replies. I have been using my Voartex since 2002 and it's worn out and the company has long since disappeared. The main aluminum I-frame is no longer the shape it once was, because of the wheels rolling back and forth 20 or 25 times per minute. It's been a lot of minutes! For example, I completed the Canadian Sculling Marathon last year to celebrate 50 years of sliding seat rowing and that took a lot of training and quite a few Blackburn Challenges over the years.

My Voartex is Serial #1276. Where are the other 1000 or so? A few, I hope, are still in use and some have probably been thrown away, but there must be a few collecting cobwebs in boathouses and sheds! If any reader knows of one...

Peter Jepson, jepjeppe@gmail.com

### Poet's Corner...

#### Caribbean Deja-Voudou

Aye, Matey, it's eighty in Haiti,  
There'll be a great rinse of old  
Port-au-Prince  
When the hurricane brings  
its roundeau.

The pots'll be flying and babes'll be cryin',  
On the isle of Hispaniola.

The great Citadel in the fires of Hell  
Will be spinnin' as on a Victrola.  
Lightnin' is frightenin' all by itself,  
But coupled with a mighty deluge,  
Will pucker yer sphincter with a roar  
that's distincter

And from which there is no refuge.  
Now, high wind and water results in  
a slaughter

That curdles your innards and cause  
The banshee to quail in the face of  
such gale,

And the flight of all grandpaw's macaws.  
So be wary and flee when you see the sea  
Take to risin' up over the wall,  
While trying to figure how you could jigger  
To make you a wave Voudou doll.

- iSchus





# HULL LIFESAVING MUSEUM

SAVING LIVES THEN. CHANGING LIVES NOW.



Since the covid plague has beset us, our gig crews have been put ashore, wandering aimlessly, and our summer camp kids and we have been apart. No rowing of any kind has happened since we pulled the plug on Snow Row 2020 in March.

Our ability to create social distance in a 32' or 25' six or four oared coxed boat has proven elusive. Our answer to this dilemma, the Summer of Sculling 2020! The Lifesaving Museum has gathered all the small single and double sculling boats, skiffs, peapods and whitehalls in our fleet, including *Cuna Hull*, our currach.

In mid July we split the fleet between our boathouse in Hull and our inner harbor site, Boston Rowing Center on Fort Point Channel. We wrote and sent out a couple of instructional videos and scraped and painted a bit and launched the whole catastrophe.

The museum actually began its rowing endeavours in 1978 with a bunch of dories. The problem with that idea was that as soon as everyone was afloat, they headed for the

## Looking for "Barn Boats"

The Hull Lifesaving Museum

four points of the compass, no discernable goals, no intrinsic safety, a programmatic dead end. We morphed as quickly as possible into coxed sweep boats as soon as we could find or build the hulls. The rest is history, we and other open water community rowing clubs invested in and built up the fleets that pepper New England and New York today. There are roughly 35 pilot gigs and 30 or so whitehall fours extant and about 2,000 rowers using them.

So now we want to go sculling. Well, the reason why is clear but the inventory of boats in Boston Harbor is already pushed to the limit. We're developing a bulletin board so people can sign up to take them out and, with luck, this will become a problem, too many scullers and not enough boats.

Therefore this request. We're looking for those beloved small wooden hulls, skiffs and

dories and wherries and Whitehalls and maybe even that currach. You know the ones. The one that belonged to Uncle Fester that we put in the barn about the same time they took away his license, the one the gang got together to build before they discovered dating, the one out back on the horses that hasn't been wet in a decade. We'll put 'em to good use.

Our adults can go on a dory safari on Saturday mornings. The kids can go out in the safe waters of Fort Point Channel in a covey. We'll care for 'em, paint and bottom paint 'em and make sure that Uncle Fester can take one out whenever he feels like it (under supervision, of course).

We'll pick it up and drop off a "Deed of Gift" stating, "Received in good condition" (the Hull Lifesaving Museum is a bonafide 501c3 non profit) which you submit to the IRS with your estimate of its value (be realistic, even though Uncle Fester loves it, it ain't worth the price of a used Mercedes). Your boat gets a good home and a new life.

If you think that boat up in the rafters might work, contact Ed McCabe or Mike McGurl at [info@hulllifesavingmuseum.org](mailto:info@hulllifesavingmuseum.org).



The Hull Lifesaving Museum is so much more than a museum. Founded in 1978, we are an essential part of the community that for 42 years has provided not only crucial lessons from our maritime heritage, but also life changing and sometimes life saving youth development experiences. Our mission celebrates the lifesaving spirit of Skills, Courage and Caring and the relevance of our history to our constituents' daily lives.

As one of our region's leading cultural organizations and agents of social change, HLM challenges its participants to draw the best from themselves by combining social services and experiential education with historical preservation and interpretation. HLM's year round education and recreation programs, serving a diverse constituency, 75% of whom are underserved youth from metropolitan Boston, are broadly recognized as best practice models. HLM's program design respects the needs, expectations and skill level of each participant.

The driving principles of the 19th century coastal lifesavers, Skills, Courage and Caring, are the foundations of the Hull Lifesaving Museum's commitment to impact individual lives for the better. We foster a community dedicated to the preservation of Boston Harbor's rich maritime heritage and lifesaving traditions through exhibits, collections, open water rowing programs and stewardship of our historic sites.



The Hull Lifesaving Museum (HLM) is housed in the former Point Allerton US Lifesaving Station opened in 1889 under the

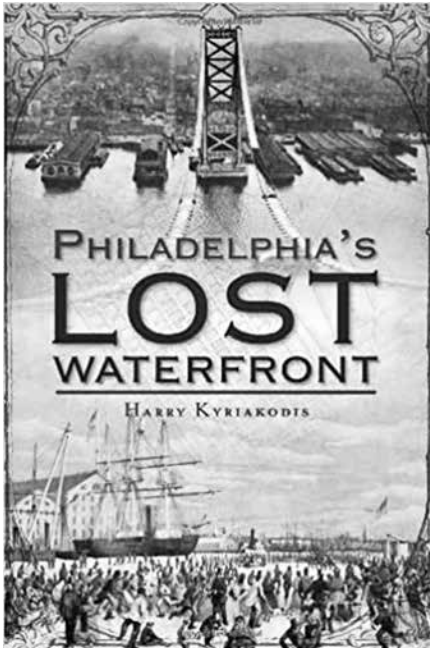
leadership of Joshua James who, with his crews of the Massachusetts Humane Society and US Lifesaving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service, were merged to form the US Coast Guard. Joshua James is considered a "father" of the US Coast Guard.



## Philadelphia's Lost Waterfront

By Harry Kyriakodis  
The History Press 2011, 1st Printing

Reviewed by Carol Jones  
Reprinted from *The Mainsheet*, Newsletter  
of the Delaware River Chapter TSCA



The history of the Philadelphia waterfront reflects the history of William Penn's city, beginning in 1688. The author has divided the original port district into 11 or 12 areas from Spring Garden Street to Washington Avenue. There were ten or more public stairways providing access from the streets of the city to the river below. By the 1800s, at a time when rich and poor lived alongside each other, Stephen Girard, a banking and shipping magnate, worried that removing the steps would deprive people of fresh air from the river. Only one such stairway remains, a narrow stairwell on the 300 block of North Front Street.

The author provides addresses of anything that remains of the Olde City. He investigates shipbuilding, shipping, railroads and military activities on the river. Old photographs appear throughout the volume as well as copies of drawings, maps and old prints, all of them well labeled and good companions to the text.

Due to the geography of the Delaware Bay and River, most residents of early Philadelphia were connected in some way with maritime and mercantile activity. Some settlers actually lived in caves dug into the embankment. In the 1970s a row of derelict buildings on the east side of Front Street built on top of early caves in the bank were rehabilitated and the caves are now cellars housing wine collections, playrooms or storage closets! Creeks that flowed into the river were compromised by sewage disposal, bridges and industrial waste.

The author does not shy away from the seamier sides of life in Olde Philadelphia with references to brothels, taverns and gambling dens. As early as 1676 there were slipways for hauling sailing ships needing



## Book Reviews

repairs. Later, the first American merchant ships to sail to China, India and Australia departed from Philadelphia. Race Street has a particularly colorful history and was named for the horse races that occasionally took place there in the 1720s.

In the early 20th century Race Street was also the site of the Rat Receiving Station of the Philadelphia Bureau of Health. Residents were encouraged to bring rats for a bounty of 5¢ if alive and 2¢ if dead.

Front and High Streets (now Market Street and Delaware Avenue) were the city's first center and The London Coffee House, located at the intersection, was a popular tavern for discussing politics and business. It was also a convenient stagecoach stop. The Coffee House became America's first Stock Exchange in 1790.

The history of Dock Street is especially interesting. Dock Creek was a Delaware River tributary with three branches, the main one flowed northwest, the second went to Washington Square and the third to Head House Square. The earliest pioneers lived in dugouts with clean water, grassy soil and river access. Later, as the merchants of Philadelphia grew wealthy, they built mansions on the banks of Dock Creek.

Eventually breweries, tanneries and slaughterhouses were also built along the banks. Soon Dock Creek was heavily polluted with sewage and industrial waste. One early episode of yellow fever was said to have been caused by the pollution in the creek. In the mid 1700s parts of Dock Creek were culverted and paved over and others were filled in. Now Dock Street is one of the few curved thoroughfares in a city of straight lines.

Penn's sale of a 500' wide parcel of land between Spruce and Pine Streets, from the Delaware River to the Schuylkill River, to a group of affluent British Quakers, "The Society of Free Traders," became known as Society Hill.

James Forten, an African American anti slavery activist, bought a sail making shop at Front and Lombard in 1798 which became a prosperous maritime business.

Queen Village, bordered by South Street, Washington Avenue, 6th Street and the Delaware River, is Philadelphia's oldest precinct, founded in 1669 by Swedish fur traders.

The first site of the Philadelphia Naval Yard was originally a boat building yard in Southwark. It became the Union's first line of defense in the Civil War. In 1876 the Naval Yard moved to its present location at the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers until its closure in 1996.

Did you know that mid river, between Market and South Streets, Windmill Island was a place where pirates were hanged in the 18th century. The island was removed

by the federal government in 1890 at the request of shipping interests.

Every good story needs a villain and the villain of this book is Interstate 95. Nothing else in the history of Philadelphia's waterfront has ever deprived the citizens of "...the beautiful esplanade and fine prospect which William Penn contemplated in the original plan of Philadelphia." Plans for the road that became I95 were considered as early as 1932 but nothing happened until after World War II. Construction started in 1956 and I95 was completed through all of Philadelphia in 1985.

I95 creates a huge barrier between residents, passersby, visitors, neighborhoods, whole communities. Its construction destroyed the physical record of 300 years of history. Even the wealthy early investors in the city's development understood the value of the Delaware River, not only as a source of commerce and income, but as a necessary connection for the people of the city to their history.

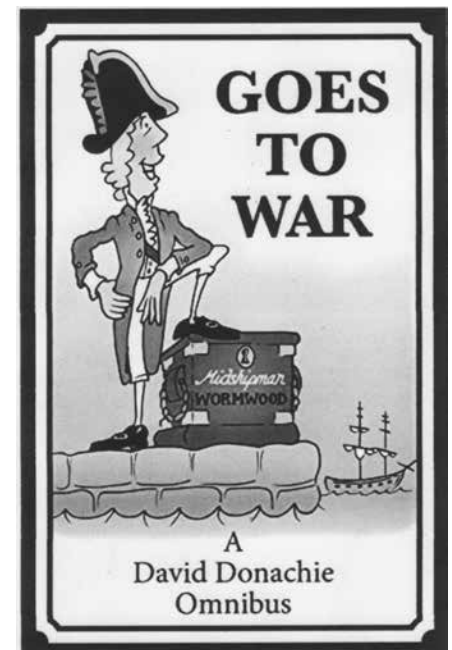
Most of Philadelphia's history is familiar to us. For TSCA members who customarily haunt waterfronts and boatyards, there are probably few surprises in store. We know about *Gazela*, *Moshulu*, *Becuna*, *Olympia* and we're very grateful to have access to the Independence Seaport Museum and its resources. This book is a nice reference to have to imagine how it all began and how much is gone. I recommend it.

## Midshipman Wormwood Goes To War

By David Donachie  
Two Fingers Books

Somewhere in Cyberspace 2020  
<https://www.twofingersbooks.com/>

Reviewed by John Nystrom



Most, if not all, of us have read Royal Navy sea adventures set in the Age of Fighting Sail, the Age of Nelson, otherwise known as the period from the Wars of the French Revolution to the end of Napoleon at Waterloo. Forester's Horatio Hornblower, O'Brian's Jack Aubrey and dozens of other heroic captains have sailed across a sea of

paper and ink, miles of film and now the infinite aether of cyberspace. All are heroic at the minimum with their own pasts, tragic or otherwise, their own failings, which they overcome to win over the crew, defeat the enemy, take a fortune in prizes and get the girl (or otherwise in this postmodern era), all in the most entertaining manner. Then there is Lord Charles Wormwood...

Charles Wormwood is the spoiled son of the lowborn, and lowlife, Earl of Mordot. Charles is debauched, conniving, manipulating, pilfering, cowardly and those are his good qualities. A less likely hero can hardly be imagined. Wormwood could have hardly picked a poorer moment to be dumped upon his nearly equally repulsive uncle, captain of one of his majesty's men-of-war. War with France is on the horizon (interrupting Charles' plans for The Grand Tour) and duty calls (but mostly the opportunity for misappropriating government property and money).

The book could have stooped to simple satire of the genre, or even become Monty Python's *Life of Nelson*, but the author stays the more demanding course of pursuing humor while staying true to the genre of naval warfare fiction. When disaster and exposure of Wormwood's extraordinary nautical ignorance threatens, he bumbles his way to survival, and even victory, accidentally becoming a hero in spite himself. Add to this his Forest Gump-like ability to accidentally engage the likes of Hood, Nelson and even Napoleon himself and the opportunities for hilarity multiply. Forest Gump meets the Keystone Cops.

David Donachie does a better than average job at achieving believability, and that isn't easy when writing humor. Donachie's day job is writing historical fiction but he has somewhere on the order of 50 books, written under his own and three other pen names. Though the bulk of his books are nautical warfare historical fiction, he has books and series covering early medieval to Renaissance epics, crime, espionage, the lead up to WWII and the Roman Republic (when most novelists using ancient Rome focus on the Empire).

Donachie has left his publishers behind and gone into cyber publishing or self publishing with his Two Fingers Books imprint. I thought that might be some obscure historical reference but no, it refers to the fact that he types away at his computer using just two fingers! I'm so far behind on my reading that I despair taking on any more of Donachie's books right now, but I can assure you that if the Wormwood saga grows (and since the period of events only covers 1792 and 1793 there is plenty of time for Wormwood to bollocks up the rest of the French Revolutionary Wars AND the Napoleonic Wars as well!) I intend to continue following the career of Lieutenant Lord Wormwood.

I just hope David keeps up with the Wormwood Saga. The last series of historical novels I fell for, Sean Russell's Charles Hayden series, is on hold at four books (I hope temporarily) as Sean packs the family off to Tahiti in a sailboat. Darned inconsiderate of Sean! David, don't disappoint me, please!

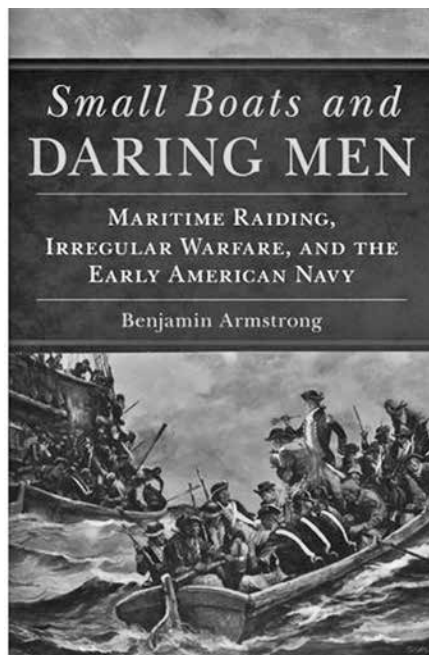
(Take a look at the Two Fingers Books link and do watch the video included.)

## Small Boats and Daring Men

*Maritime Raiding, Irregular Warfare, and the Early American Navy*

By Benjamin Armstrong  
University of Oklahoma Press  
Norman, OK 2019

Reviewed by John Nystrom



This is going to be two reviews for the price of one. First review is for Doc Regan, myself and anyone interested in historiography, naval history and how naval history gets analyzed, defense policy and warfare doctrine. Second review is for everyone else interested in an often ignored aspect of how small boats actually get used and were used in warfare and piracy (I introduced pirates so everyone is interested now).

When specialists and professionals talk about either naval history or the theory and strategy of naval warfare, they go to great pains to discuss *guerre d'escadre* vs *guerre de course*, which are fancy terms for pursuing war by warship battles up to and including fleet actions as opposed to pursuing war by attacking your opponent's commerce and trade. Historians, admirals and politicians make a big deal about the distinction. It effects defense budgets, personnel matters and diplomacy, questions of money, taxes, war and peace. This distinction was at the heart of political rhetoric and propaganda when Teddy Roosevelt and Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan led the American people to create a world class Navy in the 20th century that led to world power and victory in the most extensive wars ever fought. It changed history.

The problem is that THAT is wrong. Well, not so much wrong as it is misleadingly incomplete. Naval warfare has always had a third component (and probably the oldest component of all), war by raiding, or *guerre de razzia* to use the fancy term. The current terms for this sort of thing is "asymmetric warfare," "irregular warfare" and "special operations." This isn't something new, it has to date back to the first prehistoric use of a small boat to steal food and kidnap people from the next village and runs from ancient

to modern history and on to Navy SEAL and Marine Raider operations in the 21st century.

The author focuses of examples from the US Navy in the Age of Fighting Sail, starting with John Paul Jones in the American Revolution, to the Quasi War against France and the War against the Barbary States, through the War of 1812 and concluding with anti pirate operations in the Caribbean and on the coast of Sumatra. The author had to stop somewhere but American Navy operations like these continued through the 19th and 20th centuries and were extensive in WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

*Messing About in Boats* readers have at least some familiarity with related issues as our own Doc Regan, and Hugh Ware before him, have been noting the antics of the naval ship procurement bureaucrats reference the so called Littoral Combat Ship class of vessels. The Keystone Cops aspect of how Congress, DOD and the Navy don't bear repeating here, but it is quite a story and I think that the basis of all that is the failure of leadership to take the issues raised in this book to heart (or mind).

The author is Benjamin Armstrong, who is both a permanent professor at the Naval Academy and a Navy officer with experience in the special warfare field. Armstrong appears to be on a mission to change how historians look at naval operations and how the practitioners of military operations think about, organize, plan and carry out their unique "profession." In other words, Armstrong is another "troublemaker" in the tradition of Admiral Mahan. I do not think it is good thing that this book has not made it onto the Reading Lists that the Navy puts out annually for officers and enlisted leaders to be conversant with. On the plus side, the West Point website, specifically the Modern War Institute, has reviewed the book:

<https://mwi.usma.edu/battlefield-lessons-swashbuckling-irregular-warfare-early-american-navy/>.

In each of the historic examples of small boat warfare the author looks at three specific areas of commonality. First is the experiences, training and expectations of the leaders and sailors in these operations. Second, the craft and equipment this sort of warfare required. And last, the importance of partnerships, local contacts and on the scene diplomacy played in success, both of the immediate operation and long term.

A lot could be said about each of these three areas but this is a book review and not a political soapbox (though administrations from both parties have failed to keep these things in mind since the Civil War). Just as a personal observation, those are the ways the military bureaucracy fails throughout history. Since the Age of Sail small boats and small boat operations have always been the first thing cut after a war concludes. This leaves those who fight the next war to discover that all the expertise in small boat warfare has been lost, all the equipment gone and all the hard won partnerships ended. I won't belabor the point but I have enough examples to keep Armstrong busy for years, not that he doesn't already know most of them.

So what is there for those who are concerned with all the above? There are a whole host of stories of small boat warfare adventures, drawn from the very birth of the United States Navy until the 1839 Sumatran anti pirate expedition. I've noticed that in nautical fiction the king of that historical fiction

genre, Patrick O'Brien himself, right from the first in *Master and Commander*, has a good percentage of the action take place during just the kind of maritime raiding, small party amphibious landings, raiding, cutting out parties and other adventures. I find that far more convincing, realistic and entertaining than O'Brien's competitors who seem to think the Age of Nelson was all fleet actions with an occasional merchant prize taken to break things up.

Armstrong takes his actions from official reports, unofficial sources and eyewitness

statements or writings and puts them together in solid storytelling that I think is the mark of good history writing. I thought it was a great read all on its own. The analysis isn't stilted disconnect, it flows to enhance the story just as the stories give the analysis life and convincing force. This is good storytelling and great history writing.

For some years I've been wanting to write a long history of small boat warfare from ancient to modern times. I've wanted to do this for a number of reasons, but none so focused as Professor Armstrong's argument.

Now that *Small Boats and Daring Men* is in print, most of my planned goals have been very ably met or exceeded in a very convincing and succinct manner. If there is anything to criticize, the book needs more maps and battle diagrams. Being a small boat fanatic I, of course, would love line drawings of the small craft involved. All in all, Professor Benjamin Armstrong (Commander, USN) has written a book deserving of wide attention. I hope the "powers that be" pay attention. As to me, I'll just have to stick to book reviews.

Hilary Russell conducts an ongoing boat building school in the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts, appropriately named The Berkshire Boatbuilding School. He also has published a book on his favorite boat building subject, *Building Skin-on-Frame Double Paddles Canoes* (see his advertisement at the end of this review.) A favorite technique of his is using willow twigs he harvests from local wetlands as ribs in his ultra light craft.

Well, now Hilary has come out with this new book which is, at first glance, a history of his family in boating in tugboats, not only building them but operating them over three generations in several succeeding firms in and around New York Harbor and as far afield as the Erie Canal and Great Lakes and all along the Atlantic seaboard.

This hard working family is introduced to us in great detail, but backing it all up are first person views gathered together by the author of how it was during a period in our past maritime history when steam powered tugboats pushing/towing barges took over from prior sail powered lighters moving huge volumes of goods in out in and out of the Port of New York.

Two of the book's eight chapters are of special interest to those of us who find tugboats attractive objects of our attention, "Captain's Tales" offers 36 pages of first person descriptions of the tugboat business back in the days, including excerpts from Captain Walter Hughes' book published in the 1950s, *I Wasn't Born on the Canal, It Just Seemed Like It!* "A Gallery of Russell Tugs" is a 20-page collection of period photos of the many tugs the Russells built, as well as used, great viewing for any workboat enthusiast.

The chapters devoted to the Russell family reveal an almost bewildering array of people making things happen in their world of tugboating over three generations (there are 55 of them in the genealogy). Keeping track of all the extended family relationships is mind boggling, but just reading them through without trying to keep everyone in their place offers a look into the flow of the lives of some very resourceful people.

One excerpt, "Captain Walter Hughes Remembers Russell Brothers in the Years After WWII" will give you a glimpse into this:

"Jack McKay, Frank O'Brien, Neil Craig and Warren Russell worked in the Manhattan office.

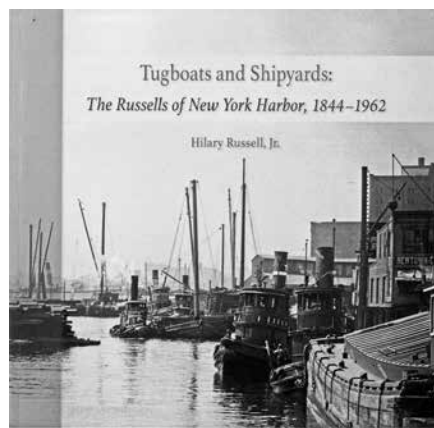
Walter Stillwaggon worked out of the barge office on Newtown Creek where the tugs would tie up, both the harbor tugs and the Canalers.

They were beautiful tugs and we kept them up like they were yachts.

When the season was over in the Canal and the Lakes we returned to New York and worked around the harbor or went south and worked the coast.

## Tugboats and Shipyards: The Russells of New York Harbor, 1844-1962

By Hilary Russell, Jr.



And before the season would start again, in March or April we would end up at Liberty Dry Dock for a two to three week overhaul, that's when we would see the dry dock people.

I remember a little shipyard dog who used to chase us when we were coming back aboard the tug after a few hours up at Jimmy Walsh's Bar, where most of the dock workers ate their lunch.

The office where several of the clerks worked had a pot belly stove. I can picture that, and I believe it was up a flight of outside stairs.

Most of the men who worked the dry dock were Irish and the boss of them always had a pipe in his mouth, and when it wasn't a pipe it was a glass of beer up at Jimmy Walsh's. Yes, I have fond memories of that dry dock and the men who worked there.

Russell towed everything in the harbor from car floats to garbage scows, but mainly oil barges. Eighty-five percent of the work was with oil barges, both winter and summer. And we worked from Norfolk to Maine on the coast and four of the five Great Lakes.

The had a logo, "We will tow anything, anywhere, anytime!"

The author wraps up this fascinating chronicle introducing us to the other four Russell descendants who are today active in the marine trades in addition to himself teaching and writing about building small craft:

Another Russell by name, Walter Jr, grandson of Frederick A. Russell, spent his life in tugs and related maritime work, including becoming a harbor/docking pilot in New York Harbor and today continues that work in Portland, Maine.

Michael O'Brien, the author's uncle Warren Russell's grandson and cousin Kath-

ryn O'Brien's son, became active in marine work on Lake Champlain and its Boats and Marine Association and the Lake Champlain Antique & Classic Boat Society.

Marc Englert, Hilary Russell Sr's grandson, works for a firm that engineers, builds and installs custom interiors on luxury yachts.

Taylor Agular, the author's uncle Ralph Russell's great grandson, represents the next generation coming along. Going into marina work early on he acquired a hoisting engineer's license and is a yacht technician and electronics installer and plans on owning and operating his own marina.

An amazing family saga, Hilary, Thank you for sharing it all with us.

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*David J. Murray*

## Tenth Annual Round Island Regatta

August 15 was a cool, gray and breezy morning at the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Peirce Island boat ramp for the Gundalow Company's tenth annual Round Island Regatta. With so many other festivals and events canceled this year the paddlers, rowers and sailors seemed especially glad to be able to get on the water in a safe way for exercise and fun.

The tightest competition was on the "Lady Isle" course, starting near the boat ramp and circling both Round Island and Lady Isle before returning under the 1B bridge for a total of 2.1 miles. Nick Brown (one of the builders of the Gundalow *Piscataqua* back in 2011) was first across the line on a paddleboard, followed closely by Jeff Ouellette (who had beaten Nick the year before).

Jock Dyer won the kayak class and was third overall. Richard Wills was the first rower in his wooden Swampscott Dory, followed by a double kayak, peapod and others. Dave Carlson won the paddle class for the shorter "Round Island" course while his three children and several friends competed in the kids kayak class and in a three person rowing dory.

Meanwhile, the sailors did three loops around Round Island in the gusty NE breeze and repeat competitor Stan Boduch took first prize in his Merry Mac dinghy.

Prizes were awarded, although without a picnic or larger festival this year. The Gundalow Company would like to thank sponsors Hamilton Marine, ReVision Energy and Seven Rivers Paddling for their support, along with all of the competitors.

(All Round Island Regatta images by David J. Murray, ClearEyePhoto.com)



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## The Port of Brattleboro

by Capt. Kent Lacey

The long 4th of July weekend (Thursday-Sunday) had four steam launches and two additional boat owners (w/o their boats) in attendance at the first Port of Brattleboro steam meet. Weather was generally sunny and hot with frequent stops for swimming to cool off. One day of light rain showers were a welcome change and did not keep any boat from steaming the Connecticut River near Brattleboro, Vermont. This section of river is bounded by a dam in Vernon, VT, to the south, and another dam at Bellows Falls to the north.

A quirk in the law gives the entire river to the State of New Hampshire where it shares a border with Vermont. Dock space was very limited on the West River where it joins the Connecticut River. Host Eric Annis provided firewood for each of the boats – Iron Butterfly, Pemi-

gewasset and Golden Eagle. Eric's boat Solace was often in the lead, allowing the other boats to learn the river's channels. The natives of the greater Brattleboro area have their own way to party on the river and its sandbars for the 4th of July, and often we found ourselves part of the great human flow of canoes, jet skis, kayaks, power boats and even an amphibian car.

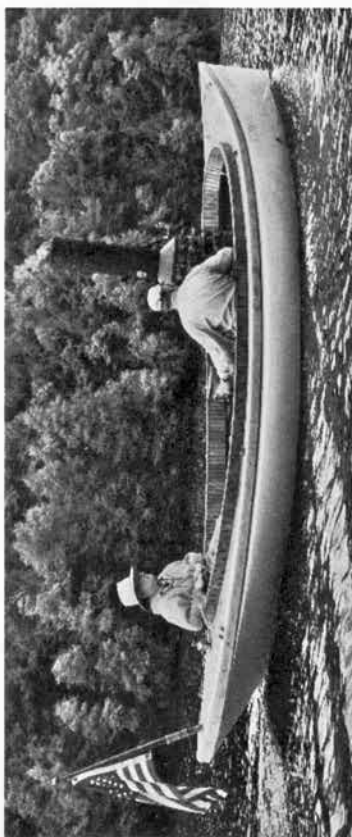
Evenings consisted of plenty of food, and afterwards the group would gather around a large camp fire. On Saturday evening, the Fourth of July, all participants were presented with a tee-shirt with an artist's drawing of all the boats in attendance. Then, as darkness fell, the skies lit up with hundreds of explosions as the neighborhood fireworks celebrated this great American holiday.



Pictured is Eric and Sarah Annis who sponsored a new meet at Brattleboro on the Connecticut River in a year when most meets are being canceled. While dock space was very limited there was room for the 5 boats pictured on the new tee shirts given to each and every attendee. We gathered around a campfire each evening after dinner where tall tales were never lacking, and a few were even believable.



During this four day meet our weather was typical 4th of July heat in farm country. An occasional nice breeze was delightful while it lasted and pictured here is a day of light rain which was wonderful relief for those on a steam boat. Golden Eagle has no canopy so that the photographer was wet, cool, and comfortable. Pictured here on Iron Butterfly is Trudy at the helm, then Bob in the engineer's seat. Carl Kriegeskotte sits facing Bob while Vicki Kriegeskotte relaxes in the stern with her dog Ruby outfitted in the red life vest. Photo by Lisette Grunwell-Lacey.



Port of Brattleboro meet. The minimalist steam launch Golden Eagle shown here in light rains, while Lisette and Kent Lacey enjoy the cooling effects of summer showers. The small fleet of boats cruised about 15 miles a day looking for the perfect place to anchor and raft for lunch. For the forth of July weekend, every steam launch was flying the US colors. Photo by Vicki Kriegeskotte.

The donated kiln dried ash & oak burned so hot that here we see SL Solace lifting safety that needed a bit of kicking with the foot, and tapping with small ballpeen hammer to get the safe to close.





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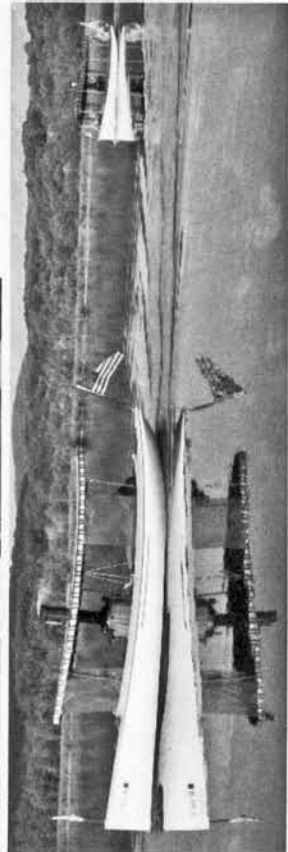
# The Smokestack

Issue Number 117 - September-October 2020

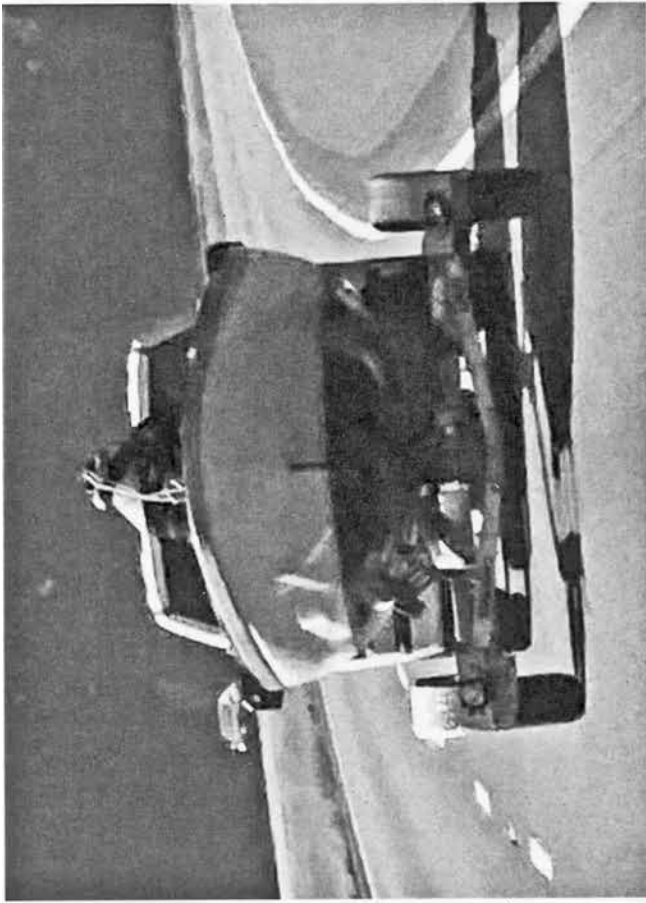
Four boat lunch raft on Connecticut River. Closest stack is Golden Eagle, then Iron Butterfly, Solace and Pemigewasset. Clouds in background is a squall line that never reached us. Photo by Kent Lacey.



When the lunch raft was breaking up, Lisette took this photo using a fish eye type lens on a new Apple phone from the stern seat aboard Golden Eagle. Iron Butterfly is next and then Solace with Pemi closest to the shoreline. We never went hungry.



Iron Butterfly and Pemi cruise smooth waters on the Fourth of July weekend on the Connecticut River in Vermont.



In all my years of steamboating I have never seen a photo of what all the cars behind me see. I run with headlights on but the two tail lights are not that bright and are low down. More lights up higher would be a good thing. Photo by Lisette.



Lady Luck was on my side and even a blind pig finds a truffle sometime. The photo here was taken in 2020 showing a car from 1957, and a canoe from 1927, and a steam boat from 1887. Oh my, I need a touch of homemade wine to calm my anxiety. This image spans more than 133 years of American nautical ingenuity.



What I love about this place is the way it's frozen in time, unspoiled by any development at all since about 1950. That's practically unheard of in California. The east side of the bay is mostly dairy ranches. The west side is mostly National and State Park. The San Andreas Fault is directly underneath it. There are a few vacation houses but most days I'm the only boat on the water. It is 15 miles long but only one mile wide.

Has it really been ten years since I spruced up *Loon*, my 1963 O'Day Daysailer? Time to do it again. Scrub and wax the deck, paint the topsides (actually Kate did that, she has a steady hand with the paint brush) and boot stripe. Pull off the old PVC rub rail and its rigid plastic under rail that has gotten all brittle and cracked. Install new ones with pop rivets and a heat gun. The woodwork is in such good shape it doesn't need much.



## Sailing Tomales Bay, California

(No, it's not "Tamales" Bay)

By Michael Wing

Put a new rubber gasket where the centerboard handle meets the trunk and fiddle with the tightness on the pressure plate. I would never pay \$58 for a bottle of scotch so I can't understand why I paid that much for a quart of Pettit "Hatteras Off White" that doesn't even taste as good. It's a good thing I don't do this often.



Time to sail, nothing broke off! No other boats, as usual, but some harbor seals, eel grass, pelicans and surf scoters for company.

And a few kayaks. Tomales Bay is a much windier place than Cape Cod, where my boat comes from. I always reef the main in the summer and usually sail with a smaller than standard Javelin jib also. No viruses out here!



We keep the boat at the Inverness Yacht Club\* on its trailer. When it's time to sail we wheel the boat over to the hoist and lift it into the water. Unless it's low tide. The bay is kind of shallow in places and I've had to learn to sail with hardly any centerboard and hardly any rudder. Actually, centerboards are overrated. She sails fine without one, or with just a few inches of one. Plus there are all these little pocket beaches on the west side and half the fun is heading straight towards one and lunging right up onto the sand. Then we can eat our lunch on shore, maybe go in for a swim if it's warm enough.

O'Day went out of business long ago but Cape Cod Shipbuilding still makes these daysailers. There are 10,000+ of them out there. Their size makes them versatile. I can sleep overnight on mine on some Therm-A-Rest pads under the cuddy cabin with my feet sticking out into the cockpit. It's small enough to sail solo but big enough to take a couple of guests. Replacement parts are easy to get online.

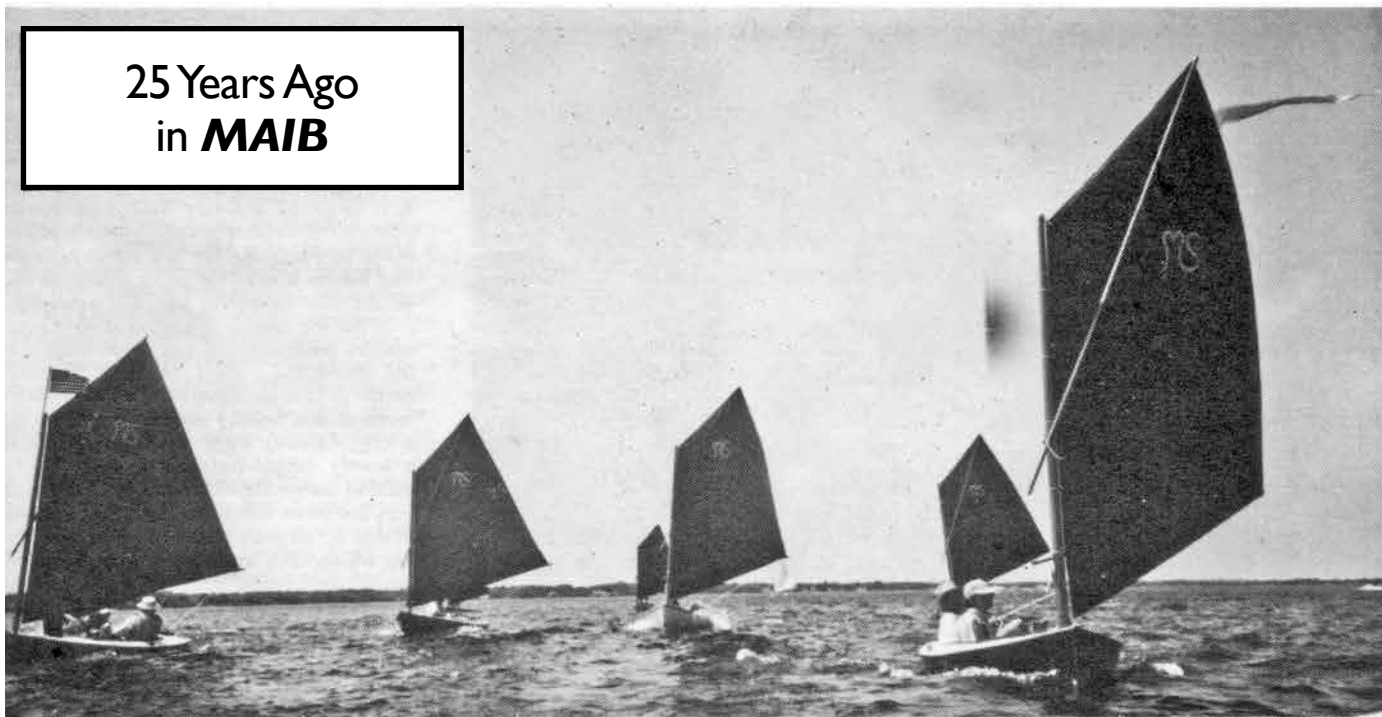


\*The IYC sounds fancy but it isn't. Nobody wears a blazer and the dues are only a few hundred a year. It's all volunteer, has no paid employees at all except for some youth sailing instructors in the summer. There's a story that one time Mick Jagger showed up at a party at the IYC but nobody knew who he was and he helped sweep up at the end of the night.





25 Years Ago  
in **MAIB**



In the years since I was charmed into buying a Melonseed Skiff and she arrived at our driveway in November of 1992, Roger Crawford's tantalizing stories of Melonseed gatherings and events fed many a daydream. I'd often stare off into space to conjure up a fleet of Melonseeds sailing together. Handicapped as I was by never actually seeing another Melonseed besides our own, *Alacrity*, it was marvelous day-dream fodder.

This summer, the daydream became reality when we attended the Summer Solstice Regatta on Duxbury Bay, Massachusetts. From the time my wife Nancy and I first started making plans in the dead of winter, until we departed Indiana to drive the eleven hundred miles east, this event was a source of great anticipation. I could hardly wait to sail with other Melonseeds and meet their enthusiastic owners, known affectionately as "Melonheads." So it came to pass when on June 16, 17 and 18 we joined the crews and boats that converged from such far-flung places as Utah, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Florida, with locals from various parts of Massachusetts, for a perfect weekend of sailing.

One can't imagine a more idyllic spot than Eagle's Nest Cove on Duxbury Bay as the base of operations for the regatta. Rimmed with tidal marsh, it measures several hundred yards in each direction. Fran Nichols' generous, comfortable, old summer cottage nestles in the trees on the point, looking as if it took root when the trees were saplings and grew there to become a part of them.

We were greeted warmly by Roger Crawford and shown the finer points of launching off the marsh. It was wonderful to finally meet the man behind the voice on the telephone, and he's as gracious in person as he is on the other end of the line. Soon *Alacrity* was rigged and with Andy Follansbee and Geoff Hoffman lending advice and a hand, she was launched over the marsh and down the muddy bank into her first taste of salt water.

## Melonseed Skiff Summer Solstice Regatta

By Roger Rodibaugh  
Photos by Nancy Rodibaugh and Denise Brown

The Friday afternoon of our arrival had been designated as an informal, unstructured gathering for the early birds. Eleven Melonseeds managed that distinction. It's hard for me to reduce that afternoon's sail to words. The crystal clear air seemed to give everything a sharp focus. The strong colors of the Melonseed hulls stood out sharply in the blue waters of the bay. The 8-10 knot breeze allowed for a relaxed afternoon and for a while we tacked back and forth outside the cove waiting for the last boat to set sail and join us. The thrill of even seeing another Melonseed was terrific...and here we were, sailing with ten of them!

The first crew we hailed as we sailed out of the cove turned out to be Jerry and Sue Zeiders from Pennsylvania in their beguiling black-hulled *Witchery*. I was glad to meet them as Jerry and I had corresponded shortly before the regatta. I'm sure many of the folks wondered who this animated stranger was, shouting out greetings to perfect strangers as if I knew them. We observed some playful squirt-gun skirmishes and took a few hits ourselves. There were a lot of compliments and thumbs-up gestures as boats crossed paths.

When all the boats were assembled outside the cove, Crawford led us on a sail through Duxbury's Snug Harbor moorings. It was fun maneuvering through the close quarters of the moored boats. One fellow who was polishing the chrome on a mega-cruiser leaned over the side and eyed us longingly. "I envy you," he said, as we swiftly but quietly passed by.

We regrouped on a little spit of marshy land and pulled the boats up on the grass for a leg stretch, photo op and more conversation. Introductions were still going strong and it was great to meet people I'd only read about. While the boats were pulled up on the marsh grass we had a good view of Melonseed #100, a milestone for Crawford Boat Building.

To celebrate and commemorate building the hundredth hull, Crawford lavished extra attention on this boat in the form of a gorgeous teak transom and centerboard in lieu of the usual daggerboard. With ivory deck, cafe au lait topsides and bright finished teak, she's a real head-turner.

We soon shoved off again and proceeded to the mouth of the Bluefish River for a short sail up to the road bridge. It was great fun short-tacking our way upstream and crossing tacks with other boats. In the afternoon light they looked splendid and the frequent maneuvering gave ample opportunity to observe them from every angle.

We headed back to the cove in the dying breeze and pulled the boats onto the marsh, setting anchors in preparation for the 3:00 a.m. high tide that would flood the area. As someone who has spent very little time around tides, I couldn't hide my amazement and fascination. I suspect some of the more tidally-experienced people were amused by my repeated exclamations as the tide ebbed through the evening. By dark there was only glistening, wet mud in the cove. Far out in the bay the lights of navigational aids and boats in the channel were reflected in the shiny mud.

Meanwhile, a cookout commenced on the front lawn at Fran's cottage where hot dogs and hamburgers were served up and we were treated to Crawford's marvelous seafood chowder. After several bowls for everyone, the party meandered down to the beach where the breeze fanned the flames of a bonfire and kept the bugs at bay. The flames flickered on satisfied but sleepy faces as we talked of boats and sailing.



From the top: Dale Andrews' beautiful strip-planked Melonseed. On the sand at Saquish beach. Roger Crawford sailing #100.

Saturday we arrived at the cove a little before the tide was high enough to launch the boats. Proof that the 3:00 a.m. tide had indeed flooded the marsh lay in the way the anchored boats were sitting in different positions than we had left them. (Again, amazement on my part.) There was a general hum of activity and conversation about as more people and boats arrived and made preparations for the afternoon's sail. The breeze was a "hat flipper" and the flags on the pier stood straight out, snapping.

As the tide crept upward toward the marsh, someone sighted some sails coming down from the Duxbury launching ramp. A few minutes later several Melonseeds sailed briskly into the cove, making a very dashing sight. Sunlight glinted off a lovely bright-finished wooden Melonseed as owner/builder Dale Andrews sailed into the cove. He built this gorgeous strip-planked, slightly enlarged version over the winter and trailered it from Florida to attend the regatta.

When the tide had climbed to the edge of the marsh, all those whose boats bedded there overnight began nudging them toward the water. At one point the bow-to-stern boats that lined up facing the cove reminded me of ducklings following their mother's lead to the water.

A merry run to Saquish beach for a picnic ensued as twenty-two Melonseeds sailed in close formation in the following wind. It was a sight I'll never forget. Ahead and astern, to port and starboard, Melonseeds frolicked all around us. Some single-handed, others with crew...all with broad smiles of genuine enjoyment on their faces. One crew included a toddler (in a baby PFD) and another featured Shelby the Sheltie dog (in a doggie PFD). Friendly exchanges and good natured fun were the order of the day. I know I left a serpentine wake as we made our way across the bay. The view of all these lovely boats bounding along with frothing bow waves was too diverting to give full attention to steering a straight course.

As we arrived in the shallows along the beach, daggerboards were raised and the boats were pulled up on shore. The boats sat upright on their flat "keel planks" side by side with sails luffing. Looking back along the beach from one end of the line of boats, the view reminded me of holding up a mirror to a mirror...with the identical profiles of sails and bows receding into the distance. The twenty-two Melonseeds that graced the bay that day constituted a record, according to Crawford.

Melonheads stood in small groups, munching sandwiches and regaling each other between bites with tales of Melonseed adventures. Others compared pieces of gear and small modifications or additions to their boats. The toddler splashed in the shallow water and the dog went off to make friends with others, cavorting in the sand and water and staring hopefully at picnic coolers. Cameras clicked and whirled as many tried to capture the magic of the view on film.

After eating a sandwich I slid *Alacrity* into the water and sailed off a little way. Crawford joined me in his #100. We sailed close together across to the tip of Clarks Island. On that short close reach I had a marvelous view of #100's seductive hull



working her way through the chop. The shadows played along the curves of the light-colored hull to her advantage and the afternoon sun glinted off the teak transom. As she heeled in the stronger puffs I could make out the shadow of the centerboard underwater.

This was one of those satisfying moments I had seen in my daydreams, sailing along close beside the man who started it all. I appreciated Crawford's smooth sailing style characterized by an economy of movement. Small steering corrections and perfect sail trim are worthy aspirations for this "all over the place" helmsman, yours truly. I had already admired Fran Nichols' concentration and fine control of her *Seedling* as we worked to windward side by side on Friday.

Festivities continued that evening at the Winsor House Inn with lively repartee and jest. As master of ceremonies, Crawford presented awards to each boat represented. This year's award was a bottle of "Melonseed Madness Moonlight Merlot" wine, with a label fashioned from Denise Brown's lovely Christmas card artistry. I found Crawford's presentation of awards particularly enjoyable because with each he spoke briefly of the recipient's experience or "claim to fame" in Melonseed circles with a fondness that tells of the personal relationship a boat builder may develop with his gratified customers.

This helped to flesh out some of the names and personalities I'd only read about before. That the Melonseed draws to it an intriguing mix of people was as evident here as on the water. People of all walks of life and age groups enjoy the boat and represent a wide variety of sailing and boating experience.

Sunday was a sort of wind-down day, and the few boats and crews that remained spent the afternoon sailing the cove in a snappy breeze. Denise Brown and I had the privilege of sailing in Crawford's hull #1. It was a treat to meet Denise who hails from Utah and sails her boat on the Great Salt Lake. It was also enjoyable to be at the helm of hull #1, the boat that was at the start of all this fun.

It would be hard to improve on three days of sailing a wonderful boat in perfect weather in such a picturesque spot. In every way the experience exceeded my daydream expectations. It helped us understand the Melonseed attraction that seems to go beyond the virtues of this great little versatile skiff.

One thing is certain: Every owner seems to love his or her boat, and takes pride in owning such a lovely craft. But as wonderful as the boat is, it's apparent that the people involved help define the experience. From Crawford who had the foresight and gumption to start building the Melonseed, to those who have worked alongside him in the shop; from the first customer who plunked down his money, to the many who enthusiastically followed suit, the boat does seem to foster infectious enthusiasm and draw a wide variety of individuals.

Roger Crawford's warm hospitality, Fran Nichols' generosity in sharing her cottage, the fellowship and friendly camaraderie we experienced with all the other crews...these are what really made the regatta such an unforgettable event.



From the top: Good times for all ages. Fran Nichols in *Seedling* working to windward. On the marsh at Eagle's Nest Cove.

# Seafair Haven Boat Festival, 2018

Reprinted from *Dinghy Cruising*, Journal of the Dinghy Cruising Association UK

by Mary Dooley



BASED NEAR THE TOWN OF MILFORD HAVEN in Pembrokeshire, Seafair Haven is a real gem of a boat festival. I would recommend it to all DCA members. This week-long event is biannual and would have taken place in mid-June this year (2020) but is currently postponed. It is held mainly within two rivers called the Cleddaus — Eastern Cleddau and Western Cleddau — which join together at Picton Point to form an extensive estuary, the Daugleddau. The area is stunningly beautiful and unspoilt as both rivers snake their way through a deep ria in the wooded hills of Pembrokeshire. Milford Haven has a natural harbour and the estuary includes a number of interesting historical features, housing castles such as Pembroke and Carew. There are also many vestiges of the industrial revolution harking back to when the area was involved in shipping anthracite and limestone.

It is hard to know where to start, I was so charmed by this festival. Maybe most importantly the organisation is superb. The organisers were dedicated, welcoming and witty; and unafraid to wear lime green polo shirts all day. Involving a whole team behind the scenes, the day to day running of the festival appears to be largely a family affair. In their luminescent shirts Alexandra and her father Phil and his twin brother, alongside others, were all easily identified and always ready to help.

For me the festival had a particular significance because this was the year I spent months agonising over the question that plagues all beginning dinghy cruisers, 'what is the best way to make it possible to sleep aboard my boat?'. I am not large, but I will admit that transforming the Mirror dinghy into a suitably cheap and tiny home presented quite a challenge. There was

All photographs ©Mary Dooley, except for the aerial shot of Lawrenny Quay and pontoon

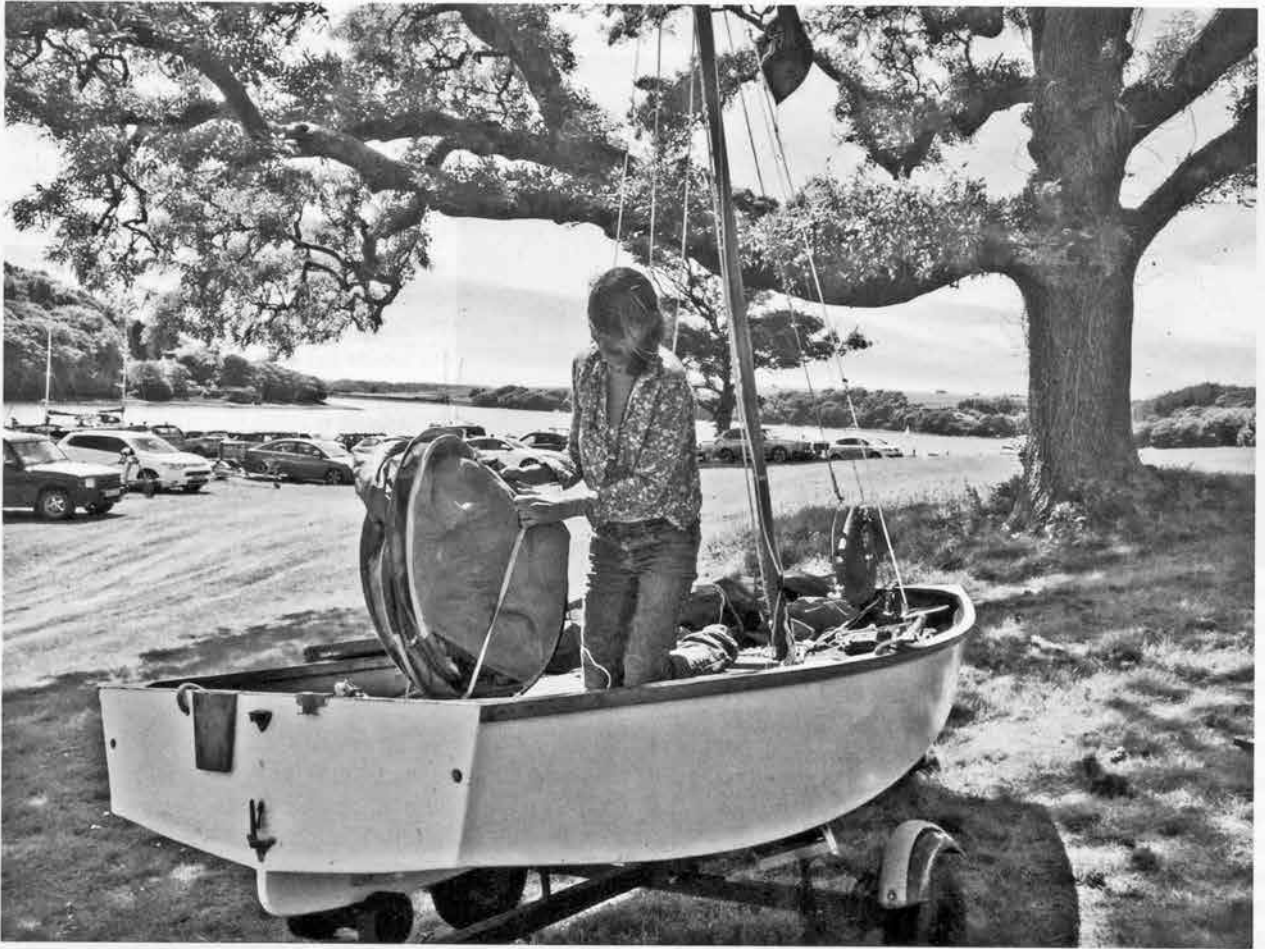
no way I was going to try to craft some ill-fitting boom tent with my sewing machine. So I considered a pop-up tent, but had been unable to find one small enough to fit the Mirror. My initial genius (as I saw it) idea was to put a Portaloos tent on its side to make myself a kind of sleeping coffin. I put this idea to others, who looked at me in despair, uncertain whether to laugh out loud.

Anyway, it was worth braving people's mirth because eventually amongst all the spluttered drinks and choked



Organisers at work: Alexandra Lort Phillips nearest to the camera





dinners that followed my portaloos suggestion, DCA member David Wooldridge told me he thought someone had managed to fit a Quechua one-person tent on a Mirror. That was the good news; the bad news was that they no longer made them. But just as the Mirror came via Gumtree so I returned again and found someone who cleared unwanted festival tents. He had two, did I want them? Does the pope wear a big hat? Yes I did. And

Mary's Quechua tent — which opens onto the foredeck area of the Mirror — from unpacking it to entering it (*below*)

so this was to be my first-ever trip sleeping aboard my very own boat. I can't tell you enough times how great it felt to be reaching this point. It is a DCA rite of passage, there should be a word for it, unhelpfully only cruising comes to my mind.

*This will be my first ever trip sleeping aboard my very own boat.*

*This will be my first ever trip sleeping aboard my very own boat.*

We were given a goody bag on arrival. At some festivals these bags contain vile slabs that you could break your teeth on, known ships' biscuits, but this Welsh goody bag contained many useful things including:

- Haute cuisine biscuits that had a light and crumbly cheese straw texture and were beguilingly fish shaped.
- Welsh cheese tightly wrapped in individual packets. I enjoyed them so much I just bit into the plastic and squeezed the whole block of cheese into my mouth at once.
- A very nice mug with artwork by DCA linked artist Claudia Myatt.





(left) Lawrenny Quay and Pontoon.

Oranges on the pontoon,  
(bottom left)

- A Seafair Haven 2018 flaglette to proudly attach to the rigging.

Each night we were moored on the pontoon belonging to the very hospitable Lawrenny Pub which provided tea, coffee, beer, breakfast, breakfast beer (sometimes), phone charging and porta showers. There was an excellent slipway and ample parking near the pub. This enabled me to set up my car canteen where, in the evening, I could eat my fish-shaped biscuits, whole lumps of cheese and peanut butter scooped out of the jar on my fingers. Joyous.

Not many people were sleeping aboard but I had two other pontoon buddies. Now I am prone to lethologica, (yes, that is the correct word for forgetting names, so get me!) but luckily I shared my pontoon with Phil and Bill, phew, lethologica solved. Phil made morning

with boats and boaters. Luckily people like Bill seem to exist everywhere, as you approach an empty quayside, you blink and pouf! there is the magic quayside helper. Ever ready to catch a line, suggest moorings, advise on tides, and give sailing advice on mystifying subjects such as balancing the boat. These quay angels also frequently tell me that their dad, school, auntie, neighbour, scouts, rotary club or knitting circle built a Mlrror, ohh — it must be 40 years ago, or maybe was it 50 years, now let me think was it Wilson or Heath... uhhmm... did we have the Cortina or the Morris 1100 ...?

Yes, that's very interesting, could you just tie the painter onto that mooring ring!

Apart from Phil and Bill my other pontoon cohabittees were copious numbers of large juicy-looking fish of the kind that seem to permanently locate themselves under pontoons. I have to warn you that I think they must be toxoid fish. I believe this theory is proven by the fact that whenever I moor on pontoons with motorways of fish circulating below, I see people with rods departing on other boats for arduous overnight journeys to go sea fishing. Rather than spending a night being sick on the open sea they could just stick their hand in the water and grab one of the plenteous pontoon fish who virtually jump into your frying pan, but then they must remind themselves that the French word for pontoon fish is poison.

I digress.

Back to Seafair Haven. For people not sleeping aboard there is camping a short walk away. The dinghy cruisers amongst us visit with curiosity. How do you transport your tents? Did you make it yourself? How do you secure it to the ground overnight? What happens if there is an earthquake or landslide? And of course most



importantly, What do you do if you need to go to the toilet? Far more conventional to sleep on a boat. And this is my first taste, AS SOMEONE WHO NOW SLEEPS ON MY VERY OWN BOAT, of pontoon life. Us tented cruisers tucked in between larger vessels, we get to share and laugh and are endlessly loquacious as long as the subject is boats.

Finally, at the end of each day we exhaustedly enclose ourselves in our cocoons and listen to the sounds of owls, shrouds clanking, water lapping, and of course the pontoon late-night post-pub pissers who, following relieving themselves, oblivious to our presence, go on to have agonisingly personal phone conversations in what they believe is privacy. It is a relief when they finally all retire and deep sleep envelops me. In the morning I am woken by conversations between Phil and Bill who have also forgotten my presence, I would feel intrusive except the conversations are much less personal; like all good dinghy cruisers, they mainly talk either about food or boats.



Each morning there was a briefing outside the pub, and the day's sailing was planned with us. I am a bit of a sucker for accents generally, but gosh the Welsh accent !!!! The sing-song voices of women and men have the beguiling attraction of sirens. If Ulysses had gone to sea off the British coast there would be a littering of wrecks around Wales, sailors having been lured by these sonorous sounds. I feel certain that it is for these voices that Eleanor of Aquitaine, one of history's most powerful women, located herself at Pembroke Castle.

I notice I haven't spoken much about the actual sailing. Well, welcome to my kind world of dinghy cruising. The internet is littered with chronicles of wild and sometimes foolhardy sailing challenges. This version of sailing may attract lots of hits from couch adventure seekers, but my fear is that the predominance of these stories makes pastimes such as dinghy cruising seem unachievable, and puts some people off in equal measure. So you people, you who love the water, love to be safe, love to be near a pub or cafe, love to be able to visit a toilet at least twice a day, love both boats and people, my world is also for you. In my world of dinghy cruising there are people who attend rallies and stay ashore because they simply



*Oranges snuggled up to a Wayfarer on the pontoon*

want to share their passion, discussing fantasy boat building projects over pints of beer. There are people who have returned to the simplicity of small unassuming dinghies in relief, exhausted by the high maintenance of their former yachts. There are the sailing beginners, not sure how to rig, let alone plan a passage — my world of cruising welcomes them. And most of all for the women, men and children who feel completely put off by the idea of the apparently dangerously daunting world of sailing, my dinghy cruising is for you. I am not ashamed to say, I have virtually always sailed in company, under the guidance of others more experienced than me. My boat is neither complex nor expensive, and I do not need copious amounts of electronic equipment. I find navigation really hard and on this trip didn't have a chart or even a compass but a photocopied ordnance survey map.

When I dinghy cruise, at every given opportunity I moor on a pontoon, use a fixed mooring, or dry out at the top of a beach, rather than wrestle with subaqua unpredictable topography, or lose sleep in storm-tossed coves that seemed so sheltered when you initially anchored. In my world of dinghy cruising a pub or cafe is never too far. Nothing is too challenging. In my world, sailing is exciting but also punctuated with periods of being able to take in and absorb the beauty of the natural world and enjoy the company of others.

But yes, we did do some wonderful sailing. Each day







and ideally should be offered by someone who understands that sailing boats are not designed to accelerate full throttle, with the sole purpose of getting from A to B as directly as possible. I was lucky enough to always have a tow from Keith in the lovely Golant Ketch he built himself aptly named *Daydream*. (See left & below)

Keith threw me a suitably long line, patiently waited while I worked out what to secure it to, set off at a gentle pace with frequent backward glances and lots of thumbs-ups carefully checking my progress,. Occasionally, in order to get the benefit of serenity and admire

curving snakes of boats made their way in whatever weather we were given, to a carefully chosen destination. Dinghies, cabin boats, yachts, RIBs, canoes, wooden or plastic. Sailing, rowing, under engine, or all three simultaneously. Here in the welcome of Seafair Haven sailing was for everyone. Did we feel intrepid? Yes. Did we feel nervous? Some of us did. Were we in danger? No. At the briefings we are shown charts and given helpful tips such as the time the tide will turn, where the tidal flow may be particularly strong (easy to remember, it is always most forceful when there is the possibility that you can be in the direct trajectory of some huge cruise ship, chain ferry, wreck, chain of rocks or military exclusion zone). Proper experienced sailors were also given lots of proper detail, detail that sometimes began to make me feel panic until one of organisers would turn to those of us with limited experience and say words to the effect of, 'Head for the five chimneys and stay out of the way of the ferry'. That was my kind of navigation.

And you can't talk about these boat festivals without mentioning the army of volunteers who person the quaysides and rescue boats. Thank you to you all, I have on occasion used your services, and am always amazed at your patience and skill. You manage never to be intrusive, but like cormorants and boobies, watchfully conduct salty sea checks at a distance.

I was also proud of my boat *Oranges*. On the way back from one excursion I was sure I overheard someone in a rescue boat saying how well *Oranges* had done, my heart swelled. Now I am not one to gloat, (whenever someone prefaces a sentence with this you know what to expect) but... in the evening people complained over a beer to me about the *Mirror* being too fast. Gloat, Gloat, Gloat. At the time I said nothing but sadly I have to confess it is not related to my abilities as a helm, she just is fast.

In my world of dinghy cruising, sometimes lack of wind means you need to get a tow, and that is completely fine. However one of the many gems of wisdom that Roger Barnes has bestowed on me is to be careful of whom you accept a tow from. Towing another boat is skilled

the Pembrokeshire beauty, he would shut off the engine and allow a pleasant period of slowly drifting. Bliss.

I really feel I should say more about the actual sailing, but what can I say? I put the sails up (now I am Intermediate I can do this, but I always find it the hardest part). The winds were never too strong, it was tidal, I followed everyone else, everyone was incredibly welcoming, adults on ferries and sailing school children in Toppers waved enthusiastically as we passed, it was great. I should have kept a ship's log of where we went and then I could have been more informative.

Seafair Haven had not only organised glorious days of sailing, but every evening there was entertainment. You could opt for a range of eating options from posh yacht club meals of lobster, to less posh peanut butter out of the jar in the car park of the Lawrenny Pub. I opted for the latter, normally the sole user of the car park's dining facilities. One night I was joined by someone quietly cogitating in the car parked next to me, extensively







enjoying a reefer, being naughty not nautical. After my 'meal' I could go and stand under the large metal 'Welcome To Lawrenny' sign and even get mobile phone reception.

One evening we were treated to an amazing outdoor screening of a film based on *The Cruise of the Conrad*: '...a Voyage Round the World undertaken and Carried out in the Ship *Joseph Conrad*, 1934, 1935 and 1936.' It is a documentary of one of the last merchant tall ships carrying grain round Cape Horn. The amazing footage captured by Alan Villers showed men climbing up masts and rigging in wild seas and icy conditions. On this passage two crew members were swept overboard. I felt humbled in my safe dinghy cruising world

Another night a man performed poetry. Having memorised the entire poem, he recited *The Ancient Mariner* whilst standing on the table, his costume and acting was brilliantly bizarre and he was accompanied by a giant bird made of carpet. Other evenings we were entertained with jazz and folk music. I made friends with Maxine the singer, and I told her I really liked their songs. At one of these convivial evenings I also met Ginny Harvey, whom I had seen during the days, skilfully sailing her Ness Boat '*Iris Anne*'. Although all the male dinghy cruisers are lovely and lovable, meeting other like-minded female dinghy cruisers is particularly special for me. I would like to think that gender doesn't matter, but, you know, sometimes I just want to hang out with other women. The legacy of Seafair Haven is that we are still great friends and continue to sail together.

So this was my SLEEP ABOARD MY OWN BOAT IN MY VERY OWN TENT inauguration. I felt like a proper DCA member now, even if I was moored to a pontoon every night and sailed each day in a heatwave of glorious weather and moderate winds.

My pop-up tent worked well despite having thrown everything together in a last minute rush, and being short on most essential items including food, spare clothing, towel and hairbrush. As time passed my personal care became neglected. With no Mirror mirror my deteriorating appearance was enhanced by the erratic pub showers which meant occasionally water ran out in mid hair wash, leaving me with no means of removing the soap. I just

dried it with my sleeping bag liner and left it unbrushed, in the morning it was forming one giant pelican's nest. But what did I care, as long as everyone else looked clean and well cared for, I felt very civilised.

Sadly I couldn't stay for the full week as I had to leave on Tuesday night due to work commitments. Completely gutted, I spent all day at work on Wednesday imagining where the Seafair sailors had got to.

When I left Lawrenny, I enthusiastically told the organisers I would be back next year. They dryly commented back, 'You will be on your own.'

There was a pause as I wondered if I had done something terribly offensive.

'It is a biennial event', they beamed.

Thank you Seafair Haven. MD

### Programme of Events, SEAFAIR HAVEN 2018

(an abridged list of the full programme offered in 2018)

#### Sat 23rd June:

Lawrenny Regatta with vintage RNLI vessels in attendance. Saint City Jazz Band at Lawrenny Arms summer afternoon and evening sessions. 1.5-hour Tall Ship Cruises from Hobbs Point. Roly Parks Memorial Row and Social at Llanion Cove.

#### Sun 24th June:

Pembroke Haven Yacht Club Upriver Race. Welcome to Seafair BBQ. Fun Raft Race at Llanion Cove.

#### Mon 25th June:

Pembroke River Run Hosted by West Wales Maritime Heritage Trust. Pembroke — Castle Pool, departing to return at 1630. Evening recital of Coleridge's epic poem *The Ancient Mariner* at Lawrenny Arms

#### Tues 26th June:

Free Sail

#### Wed 27th June:

Angle to Point House. Early briefing and depart to sail to Angle Point House for lunch at low water. Evening music entertainment at Lawrenny Arms

#### Thur 28th June:

Carew River Run

#### Fri 29th June:

Late Lunch followed by sail to Carew Castle for smaller draught vessels. Evening, Welsh Choir — well-loved regular feature of Seafair Haven — at the Lawrenny Arms.

Cresswell River Run. Early afternoon rally of fleets at Lawrenny to head to Cresswell Quay. Welsh Sea Rowers Association's Celtic Gathering begins from Llanion Cove. Party at Lawrenny Arms with live music from RAZORBILL from 9pm till late

#### Sat 30th June:

PARADE OF SAIL. All fleets gather at 12:30pm below Cleddau Bridge for Parade of Sail

#### Sun 1st July:

Welsh Sea Rowers Milford Club Race

It took a little longer than expected but we finally got in a trial sail on the Bolger Harbinger catboat. With the virus causing an area shutdown for months starting in March, I had a lot of free time to complete finishing out this bare hull catboat. The initial work was at a fairly moderate pace, working when I chose to rather than when it could be fitted in if I had had a job to go to. The idea was to have it ready to sail by mid June. It turned out to be the last Friday in July when the boat hit the launch ramp.

The day was perfect for a trial sail with sunshine and light winds. We used an electric trolling motor to get us to the outer harbor, about a half mile from the city ship canal where we launched the Harbinger. A little 35lb thrust motor moved us along at a reasonable pace but I think a 50lb thrust would be better if the need to motor against the wind would have been necessary.

We got to the outer harbor and removed the motor from the transom, pulled off the gaskets and raised the beautiful tanbark sail. It's a Lee Sail made in Hong Kong and came with the hull. At this point we learned that lazy jacks would be a big help to control the raising and lowering (striking) sail. A boom gallows might be a good addition as well, especially for reefing.

With the sail raised and the wind picking up just a bit, the lovely and talented Naomi pulled in the sheet and off we went, albeit at a somewhat easy pace. That did not last long due to darkening clouds and steadily increasing wind that went from 6-7 knots to 12 knots with the occasional stronger gust. This building wind was increased dramatically by funneling down Buffalo's inner harbor between the shore and the mile long breakwall. Things got very lively then and Naomi adjusted the sail and off we went at a speed and degree of heel that surprised us greatly. This is not your grandfather's catboat!

The boat heeled over fast, very fast, and we sailed fast, very fast. The need for us both to sit to windward and me out on the side deck kept us from going too close to vertical. Yes, we could have let the sail out some, or reefed it, but it was a test of sorts and Naomi was having fun. If it's not broke... I doubt we would have capsized (something I have had a few experiences with), likely water would have come over the coaming and the boom end would have hit the water and we would presumably have turned into the wind and righted with a healthy scoop of harbor water to cool, refresh and enjoy sloshing about in the cockpit.

This little catboat is cold molded and much lighter than plank on frame as the original plans calls for in the early '70s. The boat is very tender and some ballast is definitely needed. With that large gaff sail and the New York style hull design, this is the fastest catboat I have ever sailed. We have four of them of various sizes. By comparison this one is a rocket. She runs "like a scalded cat" as cat boaters are wont to say.

We sailed in the semi protected water of the outer harbor for about an hour or so. We decided to end the sail due to increasing wind and increasingly darkening skies. According to the marine weather radio the wind had become 15mph and gusts to 25mph. With the funneling effect of the wind whistling down the harbor, it felt like a small gale. A little much for a 15' boat with an unreefed sail and a tender hull. We did have great fun and no one got hurt or killed. Better yet, we stayed out of the local

## She Sails! And the Harbinger, Too!

By Greg Grundtisch



news this time, too. Not so for our "first sail" on a skipjack some years ago. I managed to keep this one afloat the whole time. Progress! Or fear of great embarrassment.

We did discover some things that we need to add or change. The peak and throat halyards are made fast on deck on either side of the mast. The boom attaches to the mast about a foot above the deck. This location (not sure yet the alternative) causes the boom to push and squeeze against the one setting the sail. The thin  $\frac{1}{4}$ " lines called for in the directions are not enough to hold onto as one is pulling on the halyards. There can easily be some slipping through the tender mitts and that burns very nicely and does leave a definite mark. Yes, wear gloves was the suggestion. Thicker line is the better fix.

I added two deck blocks to help make setting easier but it was still difficult to hold both halyards together with the weight of sail and spars. The  $\frac{1}{4}$ " wire rope used for the traveler worked well but was not slack enough to allow the motor to attach under it. I think I will take a suggestion from Bill Rutherford and use a traveler from a Beetle Cat. It will open up a place on either side of the transom to hang the motor freely and pull in the boom a little more.

There are two seats on either side of the centerboard trunk. One of the original builders in the past had put in seating supports along the length of the insides of the cockpit. I kept only about 3' of them on either side of the centerboard trunk and left the rest open. I should have kept them all. Sitting on the seats is much more comfortable than sitting on the deck. I may add a small aft deck, too. I did not install the rowing thwart or the raised oarlock sockets for the 10' oars that came with the boat, an addition for next year. I much prefer a motor over rowing although this design was intended specifically for its rowing "ease." I did bring along a canoe paddle, just in case.

The spars were made from lumber bought from the home improvement store. I had first built them from Douglas fir as the directions called but found that they were too whippy and would not have held up on that first sail. They called for  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " Douglas fir tapered at the ends to  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " for the boom and gaff. I almost doubled the diameter for both. A little heavier than needed it seems and another winter project tweaking them.

The mast came with the boat. It is a little over 4" thick and 16' tall of old growth 1970s Douglas fir, very dense and heavy, about 75lbs. For this trailer sailer a lighter mast is needed, or a tabernacle, either one with a forestay and possibly shrouds. This mast is unstayed and it is like having a young tree for a mast. It also adds more weight swinging above that tender hull.

I received some welcome photos and information from Bill Rutherford who has had a cold molded Harbinger for 37 years! It looked brand new. He added a small cabin. It looks good but I left it off mine in favor of extending the deck 2' and raising the coaming a couple of inches to compensate for the narrowed side decks, that to compensate for the inside seating.

As the saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words," and the pictures Bill sent were worth that and more. I thank you kindly, Bill. The photos and descriptions of changes and such are very helpful both for this season and winter alterations.

We had hoped to meet Bill and introduce our cats to one another at the Mid Atlantic Small Craft Festival but that event has

been canceled like most events this year due to the pandemic, known locally here as the Trump virus. The virus is the inspiration for names I thought to give this little vessel. We haven't yet decided but some of the contenders are *Hoax*, *Virocat*, *Catatrumpus*, *KoronaKat*, *Trumpit* and some others not fit to print. Naomi is not at all on board with those suggestions and is looking for something more traditional. *Catawampus*, perhaps?

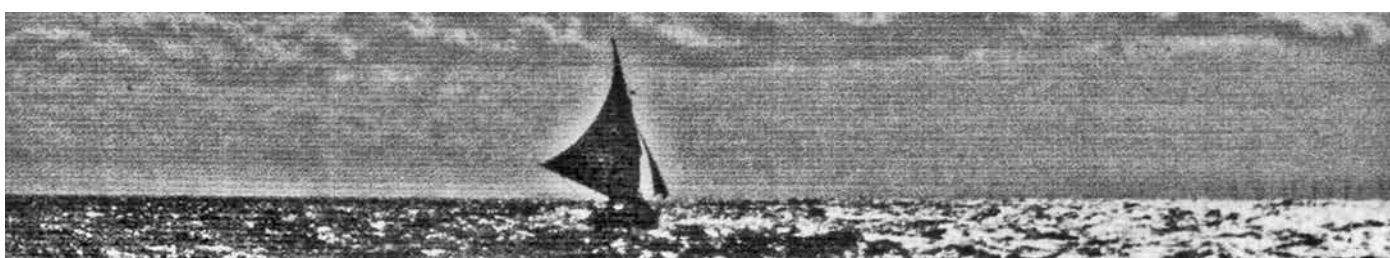


We plan to sail this as often as possible this summer fall and learn what needs to be added or changed. It's very good now and will only get better as we make the improvements. With wishful thinking, hope and luck and some control of this insane pandemic we have to deal with, we plan to get our Harbinger to the Mid Atlantic and other events next season to show off this cute little cat.



## Postscript

Here are some photos taken on my follow up trial sailing. The wind was a little light and off and on. It picked up nicely as soon as we got the boat back on the trailer. I know, the sail needs pulling out, I can hear it now.



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Photo By Mike Livdahl

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## Meandering the Texas Coast

By Michael Beebe

### I Had To...

I had to go sailing this afternoon. You'll soon understand why. About a year and a half ago my daughter, or was it my son-in-law, sent me a paper back book, *The Emerald Mile*, a book about a guiding company taking/giving tours down the Grand Canyon in wooden dories made of plywood and covered in fiberglass.

An excellent book. Today at lunch I stumbled across a 25 minute or so short movie on YouTube called "Martin's Boats," how Martin Lipton got started and inspired so many while running the river. Amazing. Plywood dories built exceedingly strong, the other companies giving the same guided tours used inflatables. Martin's were the only wooden boats on the river if memory serves me well.

Amazing photography, loaded with snippets of life on the river, from many sources. Another time, another place, while watching a surfing contest, after about an hour my friends and I went surfing ourselves, we could take no more of just watching. Today that same feeling started getting me going. I was watching skateboarders at a skatepark another time and the same thing happened. I noticed I was moving with the skaters a bit.

So it was time to go sailing. I stopped the video about halfway through, went out to the garden where the wife was, kissed the wife goodbye and went for a sail. It was nice. Wind started gusting at 18mph, a few hours later the gusts were topping out at 28. Full sail on *Red Top*. Southeast, sunny, clouds off in the distance. Today it was partly cloudy, the other day it was partly sunny. Really!

So at dinner tonight with my Linda, after I should say, we watched the other half of the video, then the first half. She was ready to go. It was inspiring. Watching these things or reading well written and good books just makes one want to get on out there.

Yes indeed!

### The Other Day

The other day, when out sailing on my 12' Lehman, I noticed the shackle pin had come unscrewed on the port side anchor and, had I needed to use that anchor, I would have lost it, the anchor for sure, maybe even the boat. Well, I wrote a little missive on it and made a mental note even to take care of that, mouse it, with stainless steel wire. Keep that bugger in there.

So yesterday the wind very, very, light, I looked at that same anchor and I hadn't repaired it yet. Dumb, dumb and dumber, yes sir. Well, I dug out my repair kit, some pliers, and coasting along about a knot and a half, I secured the shackle pin so no more worries.

A few minutes later a tug comes in pushing a barge with a huge crane aboard. I snap

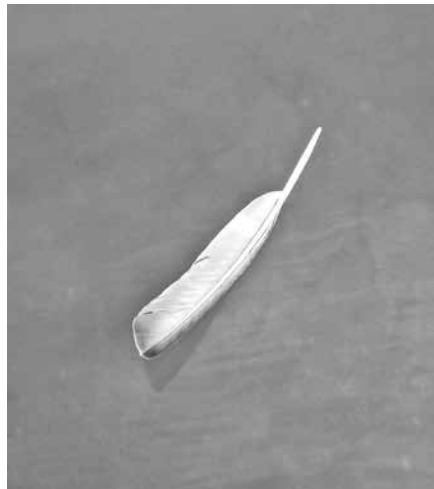
a few pics, wave to the crew and the Cap't leaves the bridge for a moment to wave his hello. Cove Harbour is a commercial harbour and the tug is one of several that call Cove



their homeport.

This fellow was coming in as I was going out. The tug is docked there in Cove Harbour, him and several others. The Cap't left the bridge for a moment to step outside to give me a wave. Cool.

Sailing to the end of the island with barely a breath of wind, I get to the shallows and stepping out I set the anchor, leaving the sail up to take a pic or two. It's so calm I notice a feather about 10" in length or so, floating on the other side of the dinghy. I'm intrigued. A bird boat, I'm thinking to myself and snap a few pictures of it as it floats past.



Had the wind been up or the water choppy I would have never noticed. Big deal, eh? A feather floating on the water. Well, actually it is a very big deal when we slow down and take a look at all that surrounds us, all a part of a bigger picture, make me thankful to be a part of it.

So I'm telling my wife about the "bird boat," well she gets a different picture in her mind than I had in mine. We had a laugh on that one and now another comes to mind, the late designer Bolger with his Bird Watcher design. I would say we're not too far apart of our shared views. Please Lord, give me more.

### Lifeboat in Reading...

In my reading of *Lifeboat*, John R Stilgoe, the author, drives home the reality of leaving the mothership and its many amenities and, in doing so, as mothership sinks lifeless into the abyss, stepping aboard a lifeboat is likened to stepping back into time leaving my iPad, Game of Thrones and the ever present cell phone.

Today in small boat sailing one of the things we seem to load up on is a vast array of electronic gadgetry we'd be lost without. How could we manage were we to leave behind all electrical devices with the vehicle and its boat trailer in the parking lot? Maybe even leave them at home or perhaps, saving a bit of money, leave them on the shelves of the marine store.

Ah! Would we do it? In this day and age when pdf-less mariners are castigated, well maybe not so severe. Say, the Texas Coast without a battery aboard, VHF neither. How would we fare? I try to leave with enough food and water for several days, change of clothes, the usual stuff, water coffee, small stove, paper charts sometimes, depends what's planned.

Foolish? Some may think so, hell, most may think so. The places I daysail at times can seem very remote, kind of like a stepping aboard a lifeboat-situation. I don't kid myself and neither should you. Stormy days, threat of rain and rising wind, there aren't many fishermen about at times and the back waters can be lonely places, lonely and beautiful at the same time, and in 12" of water something hard rips the rudder off, the sun is setting and we realize we are spending the night. Are we ready?

The diminutive sailing dinghy has just become a lifeboat. It kind of puts the edge back into living near that same edge at times. In the morning, after some coffee and breakfast, an idea is found floating by, implemented and in sailing back to the harbour an old Victory at Sea tune is playing in our head. It's a good feeling.

Embellishment aside, making port without today's modern electronics, be they a mere 40 miles distance, will make a true lifeboat



situation easier to swallow. Experience, it's said, helps.

I picked up a couple of sailors separated from their beach cat being blown downwind with its tramp sail in position. Both were wearing PFDs, funny to find my stomach grew its own bevy of butterflies. In speaking with a survival/teacher friend later, he explained what I was feeling was normal business on both sides.

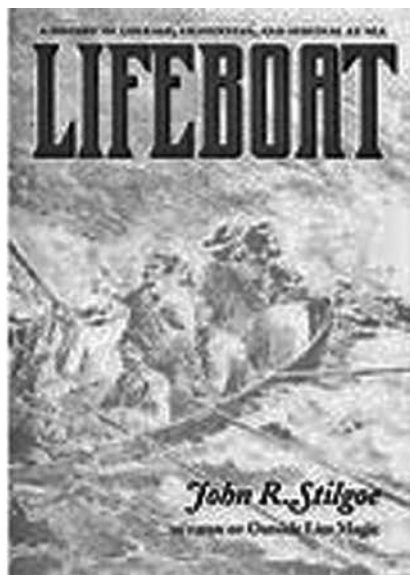
Dangerous? It all depends on the point of view. Shall we all join in? No, not by a long shot.

## *Lifeboat* by John R. Stilgoe

(Paperback)

Barns & Noble

John Stilgoe, Robert and Lois Orchard Professor in the History of Landscape at Harvard University, is the author of numerous books including *Borderland*, *Metropolitan Corridor* and, most recently, *Outside Lies Magic* and *Alongshore*. He lives on the coast of Massachusetts where he sails a ship's lifeboat from Newfoundland built in 1935.



### It's a Shame

I went for a short sail this afternoon. The wind was light, SE at 1mph. Took my little *Red Top*, all 12' of her. I get a lot of thumbs up since she was given a new paint job. After seeing pictures of my boat in the last half of the Texas 200, I was downright embarrassed. "She no look good," is how it was said. So new *Red* on *Top*, the hull topsides, Seafoam green. I had help in choosing the colors, I'm not so good at that. Add that to a very long list of many other things.

So today, what I see is a crying shame. A whole family came whizzing by on, I'd say, a 24-footer. Had a bench seat just forward of the bridge on which sat a young gal, head down checking her phone. That's the shame, but then maybe if the Cap'n said, "No phone," the daughter may just have stayed home.

Years back, I took a couple of neighbors out for a sail, one brought his son along. The next two weeks I was told how much the son enjoyed the sail. Situations never let us do another trip, however, the seed was planted. The break away from the son's video games was a positive.

Seeing that young gal on the bow of that sports fisher was not/is not an isolated sight. And not just the young lasses, boys as well, and an older crowd say up into their 30s. It's a crying shame I tell ya. A crying shame.

We old farts, too. Thinking of the incident while putting my stuff away, I checked my phone, heard a car approaching and felt the shame myself.

### It Didn't Work

It didn't work, these past two dreams of yesteryear, old age may be catching up. The mind is going one direction, its own, the body is doing everything it can to slow it down. The war is continuous. The 26' trailer sailer I've owned in the past, twice, actually got my mind to stop and consider, "It may have been the Texas heat along the coast here, mid summer," my mind rationalizes.

Laying on the foredeck on my back, gathering in a runaway jib, with one hand for the boat, the other for myself, toes and feet grabbing what they can, yeah, 72 may be a bit old for this sort of relaxed sailing. That whipping clew in the stiff breeze will throw my glasses over the side and smart my face in the process.

What took in the past 45 minutes each way was now close to two hours. But it's fun, right, going sailing alone? Out there on the bay, once things settled down, it was nice. The 26 handled the day very well.

Maybe a crew? But I gave up on crews years and years ago when surfing. A crew with surfing? It boils down to going or not going depending if someone else is coming along. Surfing, hunting, sailing, for me if I was going to go and it depended upon having another along, my time spent out there in the fields, mountains and upon the water would be severely limited.

Forty or 50 years ago I made the decision to go it alone, I haven't regretted it once. The other day I saw some pictures of the old days and small sailboats going way back more than just a few decades. Old black and whites, cool, and one of today showing a youth wearing his PFD. The blog poster thanked the kid for showing the older folk of years gone by wearing his PFD, having no knowledge that those folks of yesteryear were building a country 24-7 and did their bit of sailing on the side. The nanny state is alive and well, too many of us have bought into this mindset. I'm gonna guess you know where I stand.

So I sold the 26', I sold it and gave away the 22' that sat next to it. I also gave away the 17' catboat for much the same reason, my age.

My keepers are smaller sailboats meant to be kept, they still allow me out into those same winds that had me on the foredeck on

my back. Those keepers are two highly modified 12-footers, a Lehman and a Widgeon, along with *NED* at 10'6", and a sailing canoe I'm still working the bugs out on. The two 12s will see me out on the bays when the wind is touching 30 or so. I'm not sure how *NED* will do in the same stuff, nor the canoe, but I do hope to find out.

So goodbye you two, I'm sorry it didn't work out. But that's OK, it really is. I thank my Lord still for each and every day.

### Looking Back at Lists

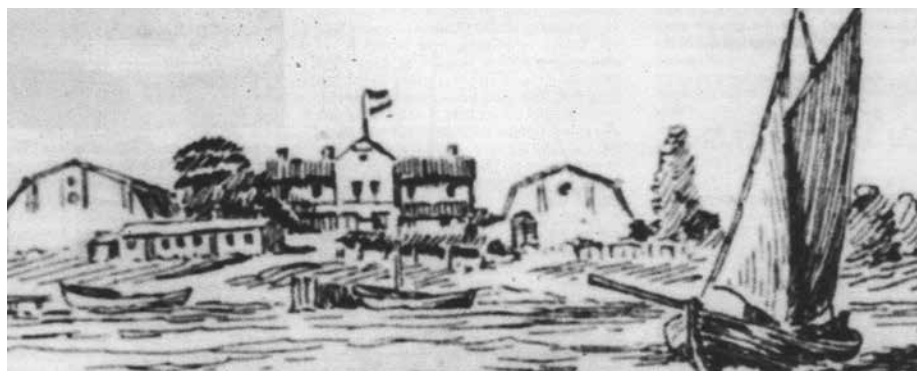
I've long been making lists for myself, of things I want to accomplish throughout the day. Most often I don't get anywhere near the bottom, but what I do cross off gives me a feeling of having done something that day. I started these lists mostly for self encouragement. First I was using a calendar, the ones with big boxes. I'd write what I did for the day, keeping track of just how much time I spent on any certain boat. With three or four girls needing work in various stages of repair or remodeling, it certainly helps.

Back a ways the *Lightning* had her own list, just her, shared with none of the others. I'd made it up each morning with the thought of going after it. At some point during the day I'd realized I was instead doing anything and everything on the *Paradox* and did not do a thing on the *Lightning*. Armed with that list for said *Lightning*, I accomplished a chore not even on the list. I know you understand. So I wrote it in at the bottom of that day's list and then crossed it off.

What I should have been doing was get a list going on the *Paradox* and start crossing things off. Then there's the aft cockpit hatch on the *Macgregor 21* going together in between all else. It really doesn't matter though, work is work, I did want to take out the *Paradox* sailing. While writing this I thought of another item to add to the *Lightning*'s list, a model. I'd been gluing up foam sheets to make a model of her. I was toying with a cabin and I really wanted to do it right.

It was to be at 1" to a foot, keeping it simple. She was shaped at that moment, the proposed cabin was glued up and drying overnight to be finished off in the morning. It was made removable because I had at least three ideas to try. The hull was given a coat of epoxy on the deck and topsides, helps to make it last.

Lists are a help to me when I go off sailing for a few days as well keeping the forgetfulness in check. In my younger days, going on a surf trip, lists were never thought of. But now I think lists are good, helps to keep me going when discouragement sets in from sitting to often in the moaning chair. Shows a fellow the headway being made.



### **Boston, Massachusetts**

Coast Guard crews have suspended their search for a 52-year-old man off Red Rocks, on Lake Champlain, Vermont. Coast Guard Sector Northern New England Command Center received a report of multiple people in the water. A total of six people were in an 18' boat and four people ended up in the water after the boat came to a stop. One person was recovered unresponsive and later pronounced deceased, two others were able to swim to shore and the other subject to the search and rescue has not been found. It is unclear how everyone ended up in the water but no one was wearing lifejackets. The incident is under investigation.

"Pending further developments, we have suspended the active search," said Cmdr James McLay, Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator, Coast Guard Sector Northern New England. "Our heartfelt condolences go out to the family, friends and loved ones involved. This tragic accident has deeply impacted responders and serves as a stark reminder to take wearing a life jacket seriously."

Coast Guard crews searched for approximately 18 hours covering 35 square nautical miles. Search crews included 29' Response Boat-Small, 45' Response Boat-Medium from Coast Guard Station Burlington, MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter from Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod, Vermont State Police, Burlington Fire Department, Colchester Fire Department.

### **Provincetown, Massachusetts**

The Coast Guard has suspended its search for a missing man off Provincetown pending new information. Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector Southeastern New England received a call reporting an overdue kayaker who was reportedly last seen with a companion who was found unresponsive on the eastern shore of Provincetown Harbor and later declared deceased. Search crews included 45' Response Boat Medium from Station Provincetown, MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter from Air Station Cape Cod, Provincetown Harbormaster, Provincetown Police Department. Crews searched 180 square miles for 16 hours.

### **New Orleans, Louisiana**

The Coast Guard rescued an overdue swimmer off the southern tip of Pelican Island, Alabama. Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector Mobile received a report from a woman whose husband tried to swim from the southern tip of Pelican Island to the Pelican Island Sandbar, nearly a mile away, and after an hour and a half had still not returned. Watchstanders directed a Coast Guard Station Dauphin Island 45' Response Boat-Medium boat crew to the vicinity and the crew was able to locate the man in the water. The man, who was not wearing a life jacket, reported he had become caught in a current that he could not swim out from.

"This swimmer is fortunate and it was prudent he had a loved one on the beach who was familiar with his swim plan," said Cmdr Kara Lavin, search and rescue mission coordinator at Coast Guard Sector Mobile. "We advise that everyone tells a friend or family member their plans when open water swimming. The currents can catch people off-guard and the absence of a life jacket put this swimmer at serious risk."

The boat crew brought the man to the station where he was evaluated by EMS and



## **Our Coast Guard in Action**

is in stable condition. Dauphin Island Fire and Rescue assisted with a beach search.



### **San Pedro, California**

The Coast Guard rescued two women who were stranded on Anacapa Island. 911 dispatchers relayed a call from the kayakers, who were stranded on a rocky outcropping, to Coast Guard Sector Los Angeles-Long Beach watchstanders. Watchstanders launched a Coast Guard Station Channel Islands Harbor 45' Response Boat-Medium crew and a Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco Forward Operating Base Mugu MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew to assist.

Once on scene, the Dolphin aircrew lowered a rescue swimmer to assess the kayakers. The women were hoisted up to the helicopter and transported to Base Mugu where they were met by EMS personnel. They were taken to St John's Regional Medical Center in Oxnard. Both were reported to be in stable condition.

"This case was a pretty unique situation given the difficult location and challenging environmental conditions, but all of the training that we've done prepared the crew for a successful rescue," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Quincy Van Vleck, an aviation survival technician stationed at Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco.



### **Jacksonville, Florida**

The Coast Guard rescued three men after their boat became disabled 18 miles east of Ponce de Leon Inlet. Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville received a phone call from the wife of one of the men aboard the disabled vessel stating she received a call for help.

A Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crew located the 25' disabled vessel and vectored in a 45' Response Boat-Medium crew from Coast Guard Station Ponce de Leon Inlet. The boat crew from Station Ponce de Leon Inlet arrived on scene and took the disabled vessel in tow to Station Ponce de Leon Inlet. The Coast Guard Cutter *Tarpon* also responded.

"It was great to see all of our training pay off," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Collin Milne, the coxswain on the case. "We had ideal weather and great communication, which was vital to the success of the mission and everyone played a pivotal role."

### **Houston, Texas**

The Coast Guard rescued a missing fisherman near the Bolivar Peninsula in Galveston, Texas. Sector Houston-Galveston watchstanders were notified by the Galveston County Sheriff's Office of a 72-year-old man who had gone missing while flounder fishing with two other individuals. Watchstanders issued an urgent marine information broadcast. A Coast Guard Air Station Houston MH-65 Dolphin helicopter aircrew, a Station Galveston Response Boat-Small boat crew and a Station Galveston Response Boat-Medium boat crew were launched to the scene.

Once on scene the aircrew successfully located and hoisted the fisherman, who was experiencing symptoms of disorientation and dehydration, and transported him to awaiting emergency medical services personnel at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas.

### **McKinleyville, California**

The Coast Guard rescued two people at night after their sailing vessel began taking on water one nautical mile offshore from Albion River near Whitesboro, California. Coast Guard Sector Humboldt Bay command center watchstanders received a notification of the sailing vessel *Playtime* reportedly hitting a submerged object in heavy fog. The vessel began taking on water with two people onboard who only had their cell phones and emergency flares available. Watchstanders directed the launch of a Coast Guard Station Noyo River 47' Motor Life Boat crew and a Coast Guard Air Station Humboldt Bay MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew.

The boatcrew arrived on scene and recovered both people from the vessel. The survivors were transported by the boatcrew to Fort Bragg, California, in good condition. The *Playtime* was determined unsafe to attempt to salvage and was reported submerged with Sector Humboldt Bay issuing a broadcast to alert mariners of a potential hazard to navigation.

"This case could have gone south quickly," said Capt Mark Hiigel, commander, Sector Humboldt Bay. "Search and rescue, especially at night, is inherently risky and is almost always a difficult mission to complete. The more a mariner is prepared with appropriate safety gear and emergency communications, the more likely there will be a successful outcome."

### San Francisco, California

The Coast Guard and a good Samaritan rescued a 43-year-old-man whose vessel caught fire on Lake Tahoe. Coast Guard Sector San Francisco watchstanders received notification from Coast Guard Station Lake Tahoe reporting a 26' Cobalt boat on fire near Dollar Point. Watchstanders dispatched a Station Lake Tahoe 29' Response Boat-Small crew to the scene. When the crew arrived on scene the man had been retrieved by a good Samaritan and was transferred to local emergency medical services personnel with no reported injuries.

"It's unfortunate the fire escalated so quickly," said Petty Officer 2nd Class TJ Mines, a boatswain's mate at Station Lake Tahoe. "We're just happy we were able to assist the owner with no injuries and that Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection arrived on scene when they did."

A Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection crew arrived on scene shortly after and extinguished the fire before the vessel sank in 21' of water.



### Seattle, Washington

The Coast Guard rescued one fisherman from a lifeboat after a 66' commercial fishing boat began to take on water about 85 miles offshore of Cape Flattery with three people aboard. Watchstanders at multiple Coast Guard units received a VHF radio hail for help from a person aboard the Canadian based commercial fishing vessel *Arctic Fox II* reporting the vessel was taking on water and the three people aboard planned to abandon ship. The fisherman who hailed for help reported they were wearing survival suits.

An MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crew from Coast Guard Sector Columbia River and an HC-27J Spartan medium range surveillance search and rescue aircrew from Coast Guard Air Station Sacramento in McClellan, California, deployed to search for the fishermen. Once on scene, Coast Guard aircrews immediately spotted a lifeboat with one survivor inside and hoisted him into the helicopter.

### Bellingham, Washington

The Coast Guard rescued three people after their 12' boat capsized about a half mile northwest of Guemes Island. Officials from Skagit County dispatch contacted

Coast Guard watchstanders to relay that a good Samaritan called from his residence on Guemes Island's water edge and reported hearing multiple voices shouting. He said he saw no boats or lights in the water but could hear both male and female voices shouting, "where are you?" and "don't give up, I'm right here." He guessed the shouts were distress calls hailing from the water in the direction of Vendovi Island.

A Coast Guard Station Bellingham 45' Response Boat-Medium crew and a Coast Guard Air Station Port Angeles MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew launched to search for people in the water. The RBM crew located and rescued three people at about 2am, two males and one female, from the water off North Beach and confirmed they were pulling crab pots when their boat capsized. The people were not wearing life jackets. The Coast Guard rescue crew took the three survivors to Cap Sante Marina in Anacortes where emergency medical services personnel were waiting to conduct medical evaluations.

"I am extremely proud of my crew and their efforts during last night's rescue," said Chief Warrant Officer Justin Uyttewaal, commanding officer at Coast Guard Station Bellingham. "Day or night, they are ready to respond to calls for help and to serve our coastal communities. Fortunately for the survivors, they had the assistance of a good Samaritan who was key to a quick and successful recovery."

### Honolulu, Hawaii

The Coast Guard suspended the active search for a 52-year-old man off Maui. Sector Honolulu received a report from the Maui County Dispatch reporting the missing man had gone spearfishing and, when he did not return, his friends contacted 911 to report he was overdue. Sector Honolulu watchstanders issued an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast notice to mariners and deployed Coast Guard crews to search the area. Involved in the search were an Air Station Barbers Point MH-65 Dolphin Helicopter crew, an Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules aircrew, a Station Maui 45' Response Boat-Medium crew, the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter *William Hart* (WPC 1134), Maui County Fire Department ground and air crews and the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter *Oliver Berry* (WPC 1124).

The weather on scene at the time of the call was winds of 23mph and seas less than one foot. Crews, working closely with the Maui County Fire Department, conducted 35 searches covering 621 square nautical miles with no sign of the missing man. The active search was suspended pending new information.

"We extend our condolences to the family during this trying time," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Jason Brian, a Sector Honolulu watchstander. "These types of cases are always the hardest for all involved and we wish the outcome had been different."

### San Pedro, California

The Coast Guard, local partner agencies and good Samaritans rescued four boaters whose vessel caught fire southwest of Ventura. Persons aboard a 25' recreational fishing boat contacted Coast Guard Sector Los Angeles-Long Beach watchstanders reporting their boat was on fire near Anacapa Island. Watchstanders diverted a Coast Guard Station Channel Islands 45' Response Boat-Medium crew to assist. While the boat crew

was enroute a good Samaritan arrived and brought the four people from the burning boat aboard their own.

Crews from Ventura County Fire Department and Los Angeles County Fire Department arrived and extinguished the blaze. The Coast Guard boat crew transferred all four people to Station Channel Islands Harbor where they were met by local emergency medical services personnel. One person was taken to St John Regional Medical Center in Oxnard. All four were reported to be in stable condition.



### Clearwater, Florida

The Coast Guard assisted two boaters after their 35' boat started taking on water two miles west of Bean Point, Florida. Coast Guard Sector St Petersburg watchstanders received a notification from the pleasure craft *Last Lap* stating that they were taking on water near Bean Point. A Coast Guard Station Cortez 45' Response Boat Medium along with a Manatee County Sheriff Office marine unit crew arrived on scene and transferred the two boaters from the sinking vessel. The Coast Guard boat crew safely transported the two passengers to Station Cortez where family members awaited.



### New Orleans, Louisiana

The Coast Guard rescued four people from a vessel taking on water 17 miles south of Southwest Pass near Venice, Louisiana. Watchstanders at Coast Guard Station New Orleans received a call on VHF radio channel 16 reporting a vessel taking on water with two adults and two minors aboard. "The fact that they were able to call in on channel 16 using their radio and reported the situation and how many people were aboard greatly assisted the crews in the search," said Lt Cmdr Patrick Plummer, search and rescue coordinator, Section New Orleans. "The crews knew what they were looking for and the general area the call came from which resulted in the family's safe return."





## Reporting from Building 36

Phil Behney reports that we have a new dory in the fleet, a Swampscott dory donated by Mr William Corkhill of Groton. It is in good structural shape, needing only some updated maintenance. Thank you, Mr Corkhill. Phil further reports, "Bill Armitage and I are doing dory maintenance with Brian Cooper dropping in for a to do list. So once the three dories that are in for repairs and paint, fixes, etc are done, I hope we will get the Swampscott in the shop in September. Also, we plan to remove some bamboo and weeds around our dory racks at Mystic Shipyard East where the boats live most of the year."

## A New Sail

Brian Cooper sends photos, "Dryintg the new sail after a trip to Rainbow Reservoir. Next step will be to shorten the spars a bit. The sail was made from a spinnaker I found washed up on Napatree Beach a few years ago. I did some research online and decided that the balanced lug rig would be the sail to make.

"First I made a sail from a tarp with a 50" luff. After using that sail I figured that I needed a little bigger sail so I scaled it up to a 62" luff. I made that sail and then a new mast and two spars. I made the spars a little long so I wouldn't end up being an inch short. I made the sail in the living room and used Judy's sewing machine."

Brian has been volunteering one week-end day a week at the Seaport's Boathouse. On his first day he was able to get two youngsters rowing, he demonstrated first, then turned the oars over for them to practice while he sat in the stern, being rowed around. It's tough being a volunteer.



## John Gardner Traditional Small Craft Association

Welcome to John Gardner  
Traditional Small Craft Association

Visit us at the Community Boat House: Building #36 UCONN Avery Point  
1084 Shennecossett Rd, Groton, CT 06340

### Good Little Skiff & Dory Maintenance

from 5:00 pm Fridays, at UCONN Avery Point Boat house Building 36  
**Next Meeting: Sunday, September 8th at 12:30 pm**  
Potluck with Meeting to follow at UCONN Avery Point Boathouse Bldg. 36

Local: [www.JGTSCA.org](http://www.JGTSCA.org) [www.facebook.com/JGTSCA](https://www.facebook.com/JGTSCA)  
National: [www.TSCA.net](http://www.TSCA.net)

## John Gardner TSCA News Notes

### The Latest From Around Our Chapter

From Bill Rutherford

We continue our issuance of informal "News Notes" as a way of keeping in touch during these times of covid restrictions. Connecticut and surrounding states continue to allow us to gradually return to more usual activities. Here the last day of July we are pleased to report a collection of early summer activities.



### Wednesday Night Dinghy Race

"By the time the race was supposed to start, fog had rolled in so thick we could not see the boats around us. In fact, I thought the wind had changed until I pulled up the compass on my phone and confirmed that René was right, it was still from the SSW, we could not see the breakwater until right on top of it.

For some reason they called the race. We had wind, or at least a breeze. Peter Vermilya was out cruising around in his Beetle Cat with the snow white sail. Our arch rival felt it necessary to chase us down(!) to tell us the race had been cancelled. So we cruised around the harbor listening to the birds, the bell buoys, the gong buoys, the whistle buoys and the rumble of the fishing boats' engines. It's amazing how your sense of hearing and smell are heightened when you can't see.

### The Latest at Mystic Seaport

The Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers (MSSM) operate from a model pond in the Shipyard. Here is a wonderful photo from MSSM's July 11 gathering by the *Sabino* Dock of a miniature *Martha*, a Chesapeake Bay draketail, cutting across in front of the Seaport's *Roann*. The photo was taken by professional ship photographer Olya Batchvarov. We thank her sharing it with us. Her husband is a professor of Maritime Archaeology at UCONN Avery Point and is interested in learning more about our Traditional Small Craft Association.

### A Kayak Trip and a Presentation

Amanda Keenan combined a kayak trip and a presentation to the Quonochontaug Historical Society (Q is a small village in Washington County, Rhode Island, technically part of Charlestown). Amanda reports that, "It is pronounced Quon-a-kon-tog. I had to have one of the locals spell it out for me! I did a lecture about their Lifesaving Station to their historical society July 8 and it's on YouTube now ([https://youtu.be/\\_eFWaDB69g4](https://youtu.be/_eFWaDB69g4)). The station was there from 1892-1938. I bet you can guess what happened to it in '38! Barry and I did a short kayak trip to check out its former location (it's where the stone wall at the left of the pond area in the panorama). It was fun to get out on the water and see the original site.

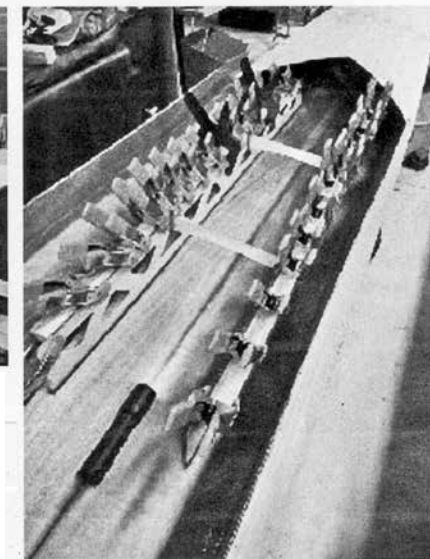
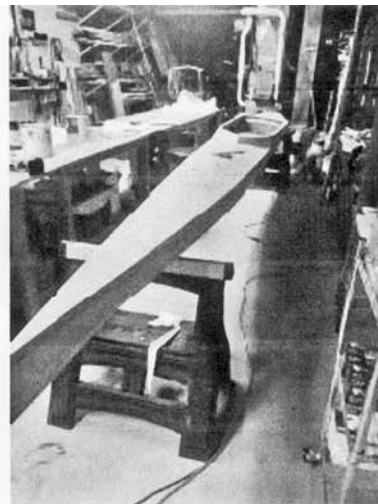


Then, out of the swirling mist came this large, long, low, classic old cabin cruiser, straight out of the '20s, in beautiful shape with mahogany cabin and bridge over a smooth, pure white hull. We expected it to vaporize into the ether, but instead it maneuvered around and backed into Breakwater's Pier (the old Skipper's Dock) for dinner. Its bow stuck out a good 20' past the end of the dock. After that excitement we drifted back to our mooring as the fog slowly, slightly lifted. When furling, the sail it was wringing wet as if it had rained."

### Father Daughter Boat Build

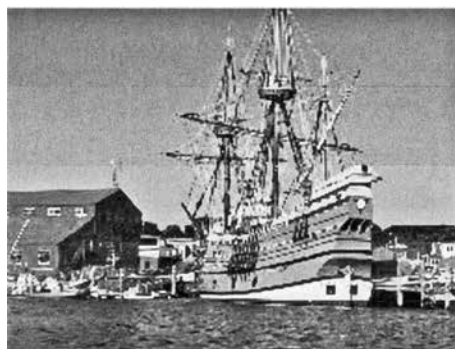
John Hennings often attends our Workshop and Pilots Programs here in Mystic. Due to this spring's restrictions, daughter Dana's competitive rowing team was sidelined, so what to do with all this available time? Build a racing scull of her own. Here is an update just in from John:

"Time has become odd here but Dana and I are well into our build and are enjoying it. She has done more than half the work and been involved in every aspect of the build. I've taken the lead when it comes to sanding, she's too young to enjoy the peace of the longboard." The photo illustrates the adage, "You can never have too many clamps..."



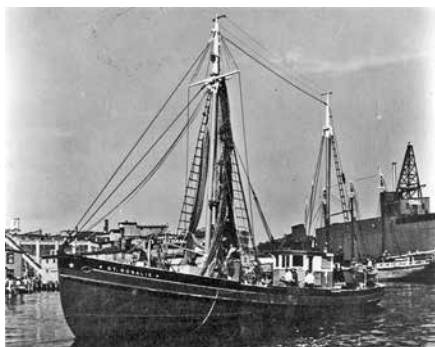
### And the *Mayflower* Sails Again

The big news in August here has been the *Mayflower* moving on down the river after completing a three year rebuild. Thanks to Sharon Brown and a friend of Bill Littell's, we have photographs to share, one before she left, one on the way and one under way in Fisher's Island Sound. Godspeed.



### A Quote for Our Times

This from David Wyman, from Castine, Maine, our new National TSCA President, "I had a great row out into the harbor this morning, it is easy to keep an oar's distance from every one when in a small boat."



There were not one, but two, Essex built boats named *St. Rosalie*. This is the first of the two, a 75' highline mackerel seiner launched on December 15, 1926. There is an American flag painted on the pilothouse which marks this as a wartime photo. The second *St. Rosalie* was featured in the 1947 film "The Shipbuilders of Essex," which followed the construction of the dragger in what is now our neighbor Harold Burnham's @schoonerardelle shipyard.



"On the subject of launchings, I must mention that concomitant with these occasions was the happy custom among Essex folks of "going around in her." In seasons of clement weather the tug would take the new vessel alongside and warp her in to one side of the two small wharves in the upper river. Here, anyone who wanted to could clamber aboard and enjoy a lovely ride down the river, across Ipswich Bay, through the Annisquam River and thence into Gloucester Harbor. Sometimes on warm summer days the tug would take the vessel all the way out around Cape Ann. Whole families, complete with picnic hampers, would enjoy this absolutely delightful excursion." - Dana Story, *Growing Up in a Shipyard*



One of the great joys of handling a small boat, especially a rowboat, is the freedom to float yourself just about anywhere you please. With a shallow draft and no keel, rudder or propeller to worry over, you're not constrained to the deep water of the channel. Perhaps the best advantage comes on unusually high tides like this, when you can drift with the flood right over the bounds of the marsh, the grasses that were above your head only hours before now bent and gently billowing in the current underneath your feet.

30 – *Messing About in Boats*, October 2020



## Frame Up Essex Shipbuilding Images from the Past

By Christopher Stepler  
Operations Administrator  
Essex Historical Society and Shipbuilding  
Museum (978) 768-t7541

To follow these posts (and more!) in real time, find us on Facebook and Instagram @essexshipbuildingmuseum.



## Workhorses, Thoroughbreds A Trip Around, Independence and a Discovery

We have photos of high days, holidays and the everyday to share with you this month, we aimed for a variety featuring boats, yachts and ships powered by oar, sail and combustion and there's even a surprise discovery!



Schooner *Independence*, launched from the John F. James Shipyard on April 29, 1901. Wishing everyone a safe and happy Independence Day!



While looking through the photographs from last year's "By Skiff and Basket" exhibit, I found one that looked familiar. A few minutes of close inspection confirmed my suspicions, this photo of a family outing taken on August 19, 1887 is another view of the vessel and framing stage we posted back in May! Not only does this help to date the prior photo, it also adds context to our understanding of the scene.

**The museum is temporarily closed to visitors during the coronavirus pandemic. Wishing you and your families the best of health.**  
**[www.essexshipbuilding.org](http://www.essexshipbuilding.org)**  
**We have a new email address!**  
**[office@essexshipbuilding.org](mailto:office@essexshipbuilding.org)**





Most photos of the A.D. Story Shipyard were taken from the causeway, but these give us views from the Burnham Shipyard @schoonerardelle looking back towards the causeway. A pair of dories are tied at the banks of the creek and several of the shipyard crew are at work on the deck of a nearly completed schooner. The cluster of buildings are across the basin on Corporation Wharf and a fast catboat is moored in the river.



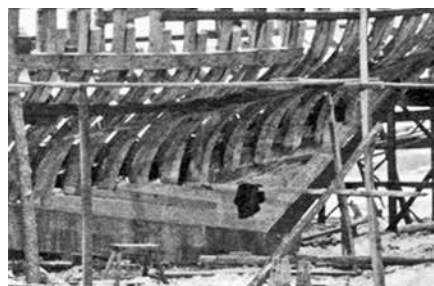
Very little infrastructure is necessary to build an Essex vessel, early shipyards were no more than a piece of land on the edge of the river with a shed or two for supplies or spare tools. New structures were added as the yards adopted new technologies, like the steam powered bandsaw just visible in its shed at the Oxner and Story Shipyard. The schooner ready to launch is the 75.5' *Mary T. Fallon*, which slid into the Essex River on November 26, 1901.



This 70' yacht (owned by a Mr Dewey of Reading) arrived in Essex in May 1948 and was hauled out at Dana Story's yard for repairs. John Perkins was on hand to snap these photos of the boat and Dana's crew. Left to right, the crew are Dana Story, Leo Doyle, Len Amero, John Allen, Albert Doucette, Dewey's son (it's not clear if he is working with the crew or just visiting) and Skeet Doyle.



This vessel is the first ever knockabout schooner *Helen B. Thomas*! Penned by Thomas F. McManus, the design eliminated the bowsprit and allowed all sail to be handled from the deck. This made the *Thomas* the newest, safest and possibly the fastest evolution in fishing schooner design. Aside from the vessel's striking profile, I found several things of interest in the photo, the dory jauntily tilted in its marsh berth as if posing for the photo, the photographer's camera box laid on the snowy marsh grass and a jacket draped carefully on the staging.



BYS #1: "Son, that just ain't gonna work."

BYS #2: "I think you'll have to replace all of the planks, right?"

BYS #3: "I hope you know enough never to mix bronze and steel fasteners."

BYS #4: Please tell me you're not going to use a heat gun to remove that paint."

BYS #5: Hmmmm. I am not so sure that's her original rudder. You ARE going to change it I assume?"

BYS #6: OH NO! They used sapwood on the top portion of her keel. That must, MUST be replaced."

And the most common and least favorite, "Too bad she's not in the water. Would have been a great day for a sail, eh!"

One of the advantages (and sometimes disadvantages) of restoring an old wooden boat such as *Marvel/Sunnyside/Susan* in an historic boatyard such as F.L. Tripp's is the never ending stream of Boat Yard Sages (BYS) ready to provide advice on virtually any topic, and then some.

In general, I occasionally find it is wise to listen to a few of these folks, especially the old timers. Then again... Case in point is the process I use to remove and replace planking fasteners that have, shall we say, passed the bar. You have NO IDEA how many BYS have commented on my approach.

### Track 3: Unscrewing and Screwing Around

As discussed in our last installment, initial Track 3 hull work would focus on removing and replacing failed fasteners and on repairing damaged planking. This effort leaped to the top of the "to do" list when we decided, as a starting point, to "wood the boat's topsides," i.e., strip the paint above the waterline to see what was what. (Figure 1)



Figure 1: Once "wooded," the boat revealed what fasteners needed replacement. (Photo courtesy Jim O'Connor)

This revealed that, over this boat's history, virtually every fastener known to man was employed to hold her planks to her ribs. This included wrought iron ship nails, galvanized screws, copper rivets, bronze screws, bronze spikes, brass screws and stainless carriage bolts (yup!). Sadly, many of these were not much more than memories of their former selves. (Figure 2)



Figure 2: Many of the fasteners were shadows of their former selves.

## A Marvelous Mystery In Pursuit of a Catboat Legend

By John Conway

### Part 3: Screws, Minesweepers and Too Many Crosbys

Good news though. Except for some ugly looking nail sick staining, the boat's topsides planking remained sound. Checks and tears and a few punky spots would have to be repaired but there was no need to replace any topside planks. Whew!

In previous restorations of our Beetle Cat *Driftwood* and our Charles Crosby Catboat *Buckrammer* I employed an approach to refastening that would probably horrify a purist but works well. In the 25 plus years I owned these boats, and with well over 2,500 fasteners replaced, I never had a one fail or the boat's performance or appearance suffer.

The methodology leverages a few simple tools. These include (Figure 3) an electric drill, a soft strike hammer, a small sharp chisel and two needlenose pliers, one a Vise-Grip model and the other a fine point electrician's. Figure 4 lays out the eight step process (assuming that the rib behind the fastener remains sound, of course).

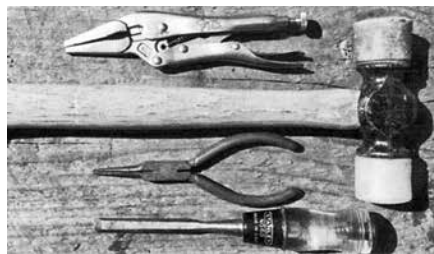


Figure 3: Five simple hand tools and an electric drill make quick work of removing failed fasteners.

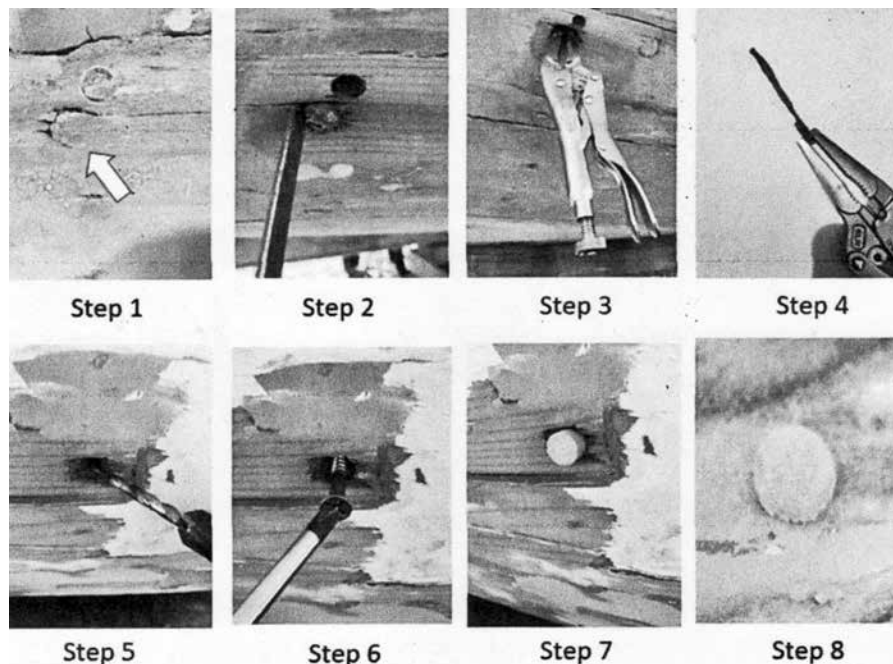


Figure 4: A somewhat unorthodox eight step process quickly removes and replaces the offending hardware

Step 1: Identify the offending fastener (look for popped bungs, rust weeping, nail sick stains, proud screws, etc).

Step 2: Carefully remove any putty or bungs with the hammer and chisel and inspect the situation. On more modern boats (1975 and up!) you might get lucky and find a screw removable with a screwdriver or screw extractor. On boats built earlier than that, Gawd knows what you might find "behind the bung." Typically a piece of iron or bronze that began life as a screw but has long ago become the proverbial shadow of its former self.

This is where the experts may flinch at my next steps. Most wooden boat restoration books insist that great care be taken when removing the offending fastener to avoid damaging the planking. Having spent the better part of several hours one day trying to surgically remove an iron screw in *Buckrammer* only to have the tail end break off in the rib, I decided there must be a better way. (FYI: Most fasteners fail at the junction between the plank and the rib, it is where water and air conspire to eat the thing away in an hourglass shape. In my experience this is where they break off when you attempt to remove them.) BEWARE! My method slightly damages the planking. (I know, I KNOW!)

As shown, I place the flat side of chisel against one side of the fastener and hammer in a depression. I then place the chisel on the opposite side of the first depression and create a second depression.

Step 3: These two opposing depressions allow me to sneak in the needlenose Vise Grips (or electricians pliers) and lock onto the fastener. With a bit of gentle rocking, twisting and cajoling the troublemaker wiggles out.

Step 4: Examine the culprit. I had no idea what this was. Bronze screw? Copper rivet? Something else? But it all came out in one piece and was non ferrous.

Step 5: I next clean out the hole with a Fuller tapered bit/countersink one size larger than the original fastener (a #12 in this case).

Step 6: I screw in a new fastener one size larger than what came out.

Step 7: I glue a bung into the countersunk hole, cut it and/or sand it flush.

Step 8: And finish things off with fairing compound.

Extensively damaged fastener zones require a bit more effort. Figure 5 demonstrates the process.

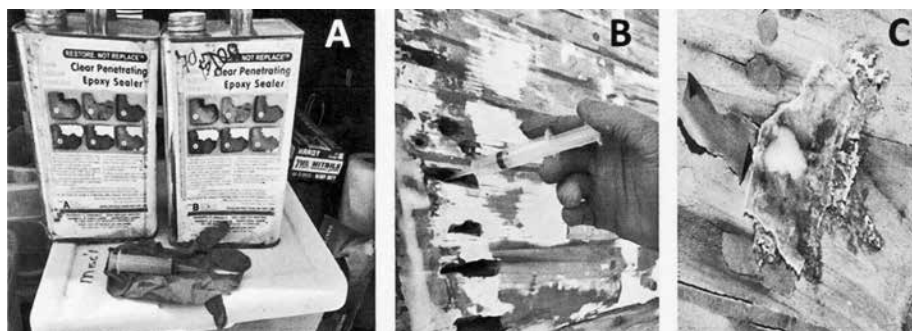


Figure 5: More extensive damage required a bit more effort to repair.

5A: Select a reputable brand of penetrating epoxy.

5B: With the offending fastener removed, inject a liberal dose of the epoxy into the affected area (assuming that the problem lies with the area around the failed fastener and that the rib remains otherwise sound. If the rib is beyond repair, then replace it (of course). Let the epoxy soaked area set overnight.

5C: Rinse out the “penetrated” hole to remove amine blush, fill the void with thickened (i.e., structural epoxy) and cover the repair with a piece of waxed paper (prevents sagging) Let this set overnight and then repeat Steps 5 through 8 above. OK purists let me have it.

While on the subject of fasteners, in last month’s installment I asked if anyone could identify the unique fasteners that grace much of this boat’s topsides planking (Figure 6).

Figure 6: *Sunnyside*’s unique topside fasteners had quite a tale to tell.

Once again, Kathryn Greene, daughter of former owner Walter (Bucky) Krasniewicz, came through with what turns out as a remarkable answer:

“Hello again, just remembered that you had a question about the unique “bronze” boat fasteners. My dad, Bucky, had a scrap metal and surplus business in Stamford for many years. When businesses would close-up he would go in and bid on the contents of the building and over the years accumulated all sorts of fascinating stuff in his numerous warehouses. When Luders shut down in Stamford in the late ‘60s he and others bought out their parts inventory. Brother Tom said that the fasteners used in *Sunnyside* were from Luders and they were originally used when Luders was building sub chasers and mine sweepers for the government and these needed to have non magnetic fasteners, thus the bronze. This might be the reason no one has ever seen these used before.”

Fascinated by the fact that our old catboat shared its heritage with US Naval subchasers and minesweepers, we hunted down a former Luders Boatyard worker, 103-year-old Fred Perkins, to confirm the tale.

“Yes sir,” Fred recalled as we handed him a fastener. “I’ll be damned. Those are the mil spec, cast, mind you, cast silicon bronze flathead ship spikes we used. We used them by the barrelful in all kinds of sizes to build out six *Aggressive*-class minesweepers in the early 1950s. We drove ‘em in like rivets with

a sledge. I’ll tell you, they were a bastard to work with as the hulls of those boats were planked with teak and it was like driving a

nail through a steel plate. We often joked that the government must have leveled a rainforest or two to supply all that teak. As I recall we ended up with a surplus of spikes and teak large enough to build quite a number of really beautiful commercial and pleasure boats.”

I explained to Fred that several Luders shipwrights moonlighted on the original restoration of *Sunnyside* in the ‘60s and that besides the use of the fasteners, much of her interior floors, replacement ribs, cabin sole and exterior deck planks were fabricated out of teak. Fred just cocked his head, smiled from ear to ear and whispered, “Now why doesn’t that surprise me?” Figure 7 is a photo of one of the boats Fred worked on, the *USN MSC Salute*.

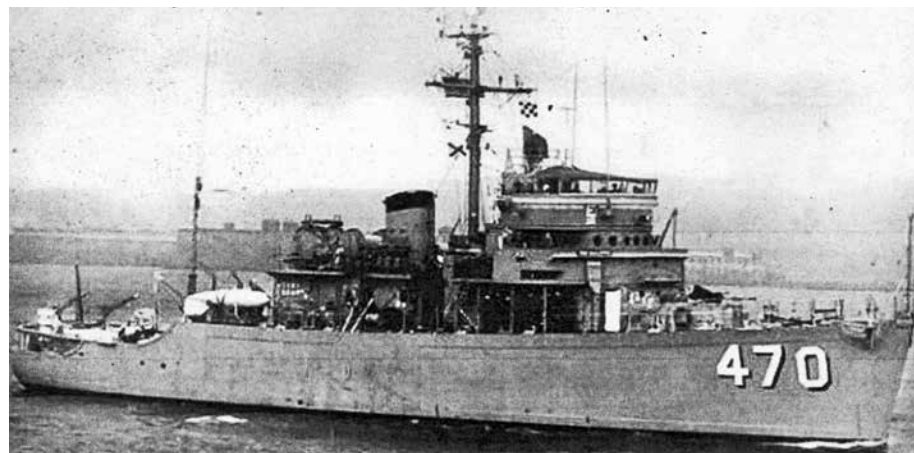


Figure 7: *Sunnyside*’s pedigree included minesweeper cousins such as the *MSC Salute*.

Wikipedia data rounded out Fred’s story, “The *Aggressive*-class minesweepers were a class of US built minesweepers. They were designated as MSO (Mine Sweeper Ocean) to distinguish them from the smaller coastal MSCs and inshore MSIs. Of the 53 constructed for the United States Navy, six were built at Luders Marine Construction Co of Stamford, Connecticut, between 1954 and 1957. These included *Aggressive* (422), *Avenge* (423), *Rival* (468), *Sagacity* (469), *Salute* (470) and *Skill* (471).

Thirty-three of the class were decommissioned before the mid 1970s. Four were sold to the Republic of China in 1994 and reclassified as *Yung Yang* Class minesweepers. They were still in active service in 2012.

*Aggressive*-class minesweepers used AN/SQ-14 mine hunting sonar to locate moored or bottom mines. They used electromagnetic cables to set off mines or other cables to cut their mooring lines and various magnetic and acoustical devices to set off mines. Toward the end of their use the class also employed remote submersibles like the Super Sea Rover to locate mines.

Who would have guessed?!

### Track 1: The Krasniewicz Saga Continues

Beyond informing us about minesweeper fasteners, Kathryn Greene and her siblings have continued in their efforts to assemble the provenance of this historic catboat. Kathryn reports:

“My brother Tim remembers that dad bought the boat from a man (we think an airline pilot) in Westport, Connecticut, who lived off the Merritt Parkway near the Red Barn restaurant.” (Do any of our readers know this person?) Not sure I mentioned this but the deal between my mom and dad was that dad could have the boat if my mother could have one last child (!) They both said “Yes!” and my brother Patrick was born on March 18, 1964.”

Kathryn continues, “As far as naming the boat, there are two combining stories, my dad’s business, Vulcan Surplus, was on Sunnyside Avenue in Stamford AND one of my mom’s favorite places to visit was Washington Irving’s home “Sunnyside” in Tarrytown, New York. The rest is history. I did go to my locker and found a few things that I have attached (Figures 8, 9 and 10). My brother Tom said that you can tell the difference between the “Resurrection” (1960s) and the “Restoration” (1980s) pics by her white mast vs her varnished mast, respectively.”







Figure 8: Captain Walter Krasniewicz proudly single handing the “resurrected” *Sunnyside*.

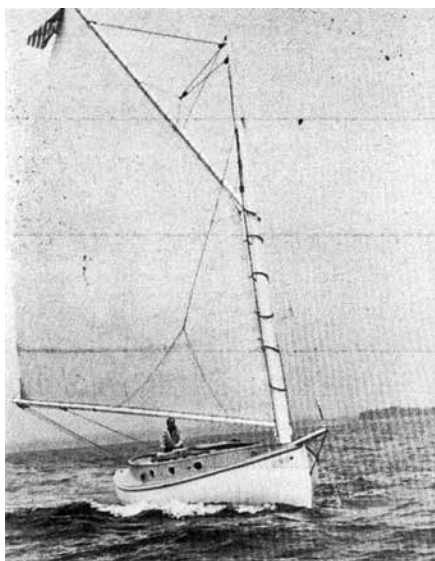


Figure 9: *Sunnyside*’s own version of the “K-jammer” kids. (L-R Tim, Beth, Candi, Tom, Patrick, Mary Anne).



Figure 10: The “restoration” phase *Sunnyside* cavorting with the catboat fleet.

One of the cleverest but clearly most heartbreaking mementos supplied by Kathryn Greene is the For Sale poster created by Katzenjammer Kids artist Peter Wells. (Figure 11). (Breaking News: As we go to press, we have learned that Peter Wells served during WW II on US Navy PT Boats in the Pacific. He was the son of noted Naval Architect John H Wells whose drawings are among the collection at Mystic Seaport Museum.)

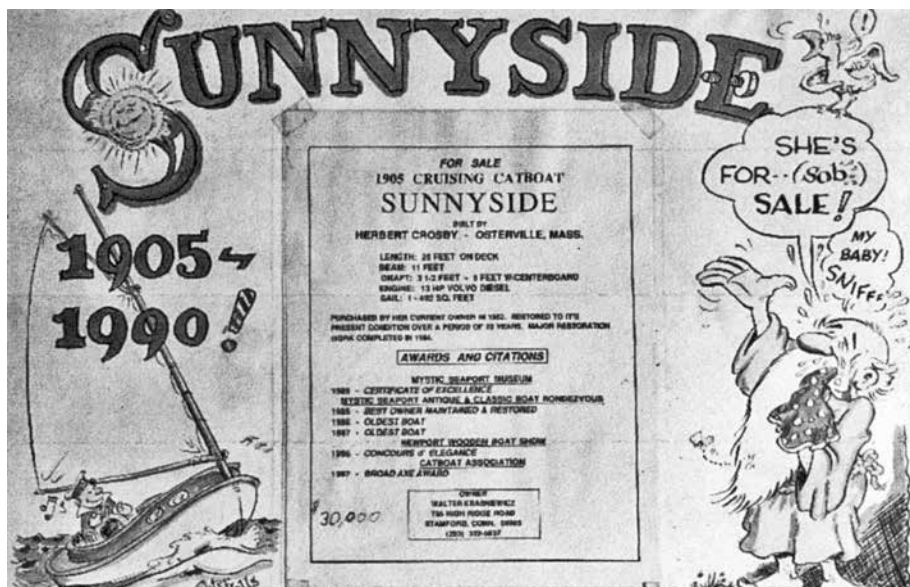


Figure 11: Cartoonist Peter Wells’ bittersweet “*Sunnyside* For Sale” poster.

In a follow on email I asked Kathryn, “Why did your dad sell her?”

Kathryn explained, “Bucky had *Sunnyside* for over 30 years and enjoyed her very much. Most of us kids had moved away from Stamford so we weren’t there to sail with him. Plus there was the cost and work of upkeep. He had retired from his business a couple of years before and my mom, Kay, was diagnosed with cancer in 1988 and passed in 1992. He kept sailing her until he finally sold her in 1995. I guess it sort of was the end of an era.

To replace her and enable him to still be out on the water he purchased a mahogany rowing boat that he called *Liberty*. Growing up on Long Island Sound he was excited to explore the coastline close up. Also, at that point he became quite the environmentalist and reported goings on along the shoreline, even bringing a reporter from the Stamford Advocate on board *Liberty* to talk about who was doing what to the Sound. I have sent you a pic of him on patrol! (Figure 12)”



Figure 12: *Sunnyside*’s skipper Walter Krasniewicz on final patrol aboard *Liberty*.

#### *Sunnyside* Sails On

As reported in earlier versions, we know that *Sunnyside* was purchased by a Long Island based couple, Hoda Kaplan and Jeff Megerdichian, in 1995 and that they sailed her for ten years out of Greenport, Long Island, New York. One of Hoda’s friends, Joe Chetwynd, a former South Street Seaport boatwright and now a Massachusetts based nautical historian, stopped by the Tripp boatyard and reminisced about several wonderful day cruises aboard *Sunnyside* during Hoda and Jeff’s stewardship.

Joe reported, “It was a lot of boat for Hoda to handle but she managed. We would kid her that she paid “way too much” for the old thing (\$30,000) but that did not bother her a bit.” Sadly, with Joe’s help, we learned that Hoda’s love for *Sunnyside* even earned the boat a place in her obituary following her untimely passing:

“Hoda Jane Kaplan, 57, of Brooklyn, New York, formerly of Chicago, died on August 21, 2002 (note, corrected from earlier reports of her passing in 1995) from injuries suffered in an automobile accident. Sailor, scholar and lover of subway trains, she volunteered at the South Street Seaport for 15 years renovating the *Wavertree* (Figure 13) a sailing ship built in 1885. For the past ten years she sailed her catboat, the *Sunnyside*.”

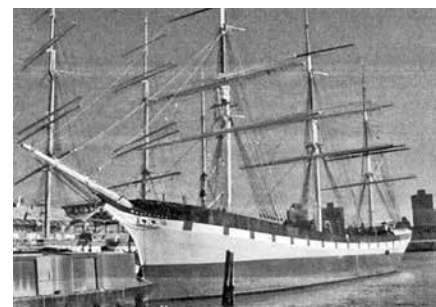


Figure 13: Hoda Kaplan’s “other” boat, *Wavertree*, named after a district in Liverpool England.

Following Hoda’s passing, Jeff decided to place *Sunnyside* on the market. Catboat Association CIO, Spencer Day sent the following “For Sale” ad uncovered from his research into Catboat Association Bulletins:

“1905 Herbert Crosby 25’ catboat *Sunnyside*. In water and in sailing condition but needs to be refastened and will need a new deck. Counter stern, cedar on oak, very old Volvo MD7A 13hp Diesel inboard. Offered to anyone with the right combination of skills, resources and time. The present owner is at the limit of all three of these and cannot maintain her as a classic boat. She has already won the CBA Broad Axe Award for a previous owner. You could win the second one. This is too nice a boat to lose. If you are a

motivated individual, organization or builder looking for a rebuilding project, you should consider this classic craft. Asking \$5,000 or best offer. Located on Long Island.”

All of which brings us up to her most previous owners, Bob Luckraft and associates.

## Track 2: The Bottoms Up Research Continues

Catboat historian and author, Stan Grayson has been joined by nautical historian Joe Chetwynd in their hunt for the boat’s pedigree following her 1904-1907 racing career with Quincy Yacht Club Commodore Ira Whittemore. Following his boatyard visit Joe sent the following comments and update:

“*Marvel* is a great touchstone of nautical history and you were both right and very courageous to take on both her rescue and restoration. I was very surprised to learn that she was once enrolled in the Quincy Yacht Club and sailed my home waters under Commodore Ira M. Whittemore. I hope that the QYC is still interested in their once proud history in sailboats. They are primarily power boaters these days. I suggest that we might appeal to their membership for some modicum support for the boat’s restoration project.” (Author’s note: I have tried my darndest to contact the officers and staff at the QYC to no avail. If any reader can suggest who and how to contact an appropriate member, please forward their contact information to me at jecownay3@gmail.com.)

Joe also suggested that we should conduct research at the Thomas Crane Public Library in their special collections of historical photographs and, possibly, in the microfilms of the City of Quincy newspaper of that time, *The Quincy Patriot Ledger* (This research is now underway. More in a subsequent installment).

On yet a other boatyard visit, former owner Bob Luckraft, while inspecting the restoration work underway, noticed that her builder’s plaque was missing. He recounted, “Herb Crosby, like many of the Crosbys, always affixed a beautiful bronze Builder’s Plaque to every boat shipped. For some reason these have been targeted by thieves. My plaque on *Genevieve* was stolen and it looks like your boat has lost her’s as well.”

Bob continued, “You know, we might ask the Catboat Association if any other Herb Crosby boats out there still have their plaques. Who knows? We might get lucky and be able to make a copy.”

We did just that and found that *Patience*, an 1895 H.F Crosby, currently sailing south of New England (Figure 14), still carries her “plate.”



Figure 14: *Patience*, an 1898 Herbert F. Crosby Catboat that still carries her builder’s plate.

Robert V Jones, owner and skipper, was contacted and he readily agreed to lend the plaque to the cause. The relic (Figure 15) arrived by FedEx and multiple copies will soon be reproduced thanks to the beneficence of a Massachusetts based bronze foundry owner. (More on this in a subsequent installment.)



Figure 15: The author with the Herbert F Crosby builder’s plate relic

By the way, *Patience* is currently for sale: <https://www.barnegatbayyachtbroker.com/agm/445052512>.

Before shoving off on the day of his visit, Luckraft had one additional “oh by the way” to share, “In researching the provenance of *Marvel* in *The Rudder*, I came across an image of the burgee of the Cape Catboat Association, the sailing club that she belonged to. I’ve had a number of these reproduced and thought you might like a copy.”

With that he handed me the ensign shown in Figure 16. We plan to fly this proudly when the boat’s big resplash happens next season.

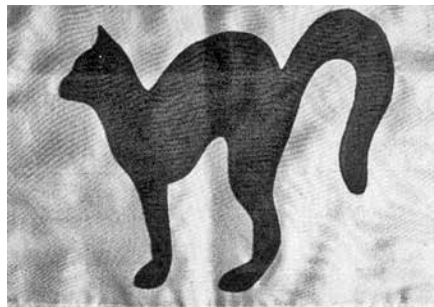


Figure 16: The reproduced ensign of the legendary Cape Catboat Association.

## Epilog

Chetwynd left a voicemail marked urgent. “John, I’ve located a copy of the QYC’s 1907 Yearbook. In the book *Marvel* is described as follows, *Marvel*, CB Cat, Owner Ira Whittemore, Dims 25’0”x24’0”x11’3”x3”, Builder D&CH Crosby, Osterville, Massachusetts.”

“OMG! You may not have a Herbert F. Crosby boat after all but rather a Daniel and Charles H. Crosby built boat. Call me.”

## (To Be Continued)

(The author would greatly appreciate donations as small as \$1.00 to support the grassroots project restoring this historic catboat. These can be directly made to: <https://gogetfunding.com/marvel-an-historic-boat-restoration-project/>.)

## Cartoonist Peter Wells

Peter Wells (born Herbert Hilbish Wells) was an American cartoonist and children’s book writer most famous for contributing drawings to the Katzenjammer Kids comic books and for being an instructor for the Famous Artists School Cartooning Course.

Peter, as he was commonly known, was born on January 8, 1912, to John H. and Wilhelmina (Baron) Wells of Port Clinton, Ohio. His father was an accomplished yacht designer with his own firm. He designed yachts for executives of early automobile companies in the Detroit area, among other notables. A collection of John H. Wells’ designs is held at the Mystic Seaport.

Peter Wells spent his early years in Portland, Maine, and later Bronxville, New York, and Scarsdale, New York. After his preparatory education at Morristown Academy, he graduated from Yale University in 1935. At Yale he nurtured a penchant for cartooning while serving as art director of *The Yale Record*.

During the early 1940s Wells wrote and illustrated a variety of children’s books, one of which, *Mr. Tootwhistle’s Invention*, won first prize in the *New York Herald Tribune’s* Children’s Spring Book Festival of 1942. His other children’s books included *Dolly Madison’s Surprise* and *The Pirate’s Apprentice*. He also provided illustrations for children’s books by other authors.

After his success with *Mr. Tootwhistle’s Invention*, Peter Wells was hired as a staff cartoonist by King Features. Between 1948 and 1951 Wells wrote and drew for King Features’ Katzenjammer Kids comic books series, although attributing the exact issues by him is difficult as the staff cartoonists usually didn’t sign their work.

During World War II, Wells entered the Navy and served on a PT boat in the Pacific.

Between 1946 and 1952, Wells illustrated for *The Blue Book Magazine*, a popular pulp magazine which included artwork for a series of excerpts from Richard Hakluyt’s *Principall Discoveries of the English Nation*. During the 1950s and 1960s he created the cartoon strip Pete the Pup and others for *Scholastic* magazine. He also published cartoons in various boating magazines.

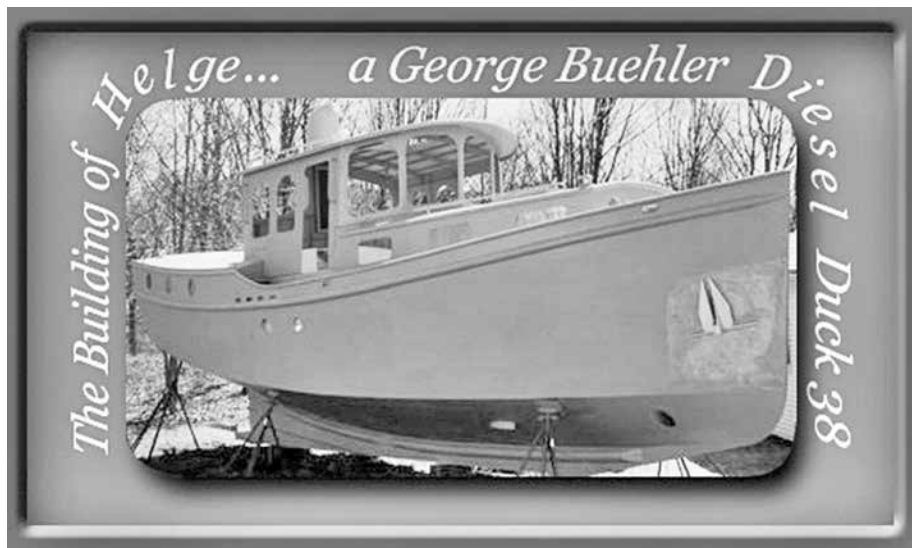
From 1954 to the early 1970s he worked for the Famous Artists School, an art correspondence program founded by Al Dorne, as an instructor for the Cartooning Course. At one point he and “Bud” (Forrest Cowles) Sagendorf acted as co directors of the Cartooning Course and helped create some its lessons.

Peter was married for 60 years to his wife Helen (Rollins) Wells. They lived for many years in Noroton, Connecticut, where they raised three boys whose antics found their way into many Katzenjammer Kids comics and his children’s books. In his spare time, Wells was an avid sailor and jazz musician (playing the bass saxophone).

Peter Wells was a member of the National Cartoonist Society.

# The Building of *Helge* A George Buehler Diesel Duck Part 14

Wendell Gallagher is building a Buehler Diesel Duck 38. He had the steel hull built at a yard and trucked to his home and is doing the rest himself.

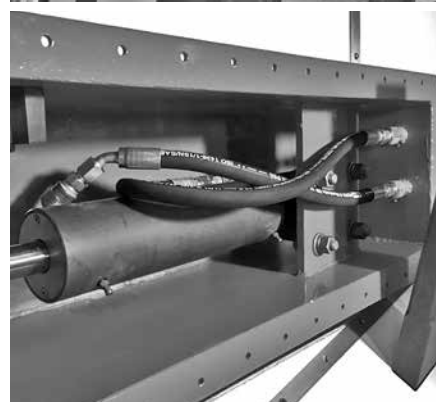


## The Steering

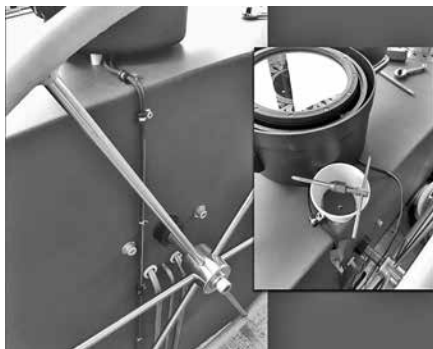
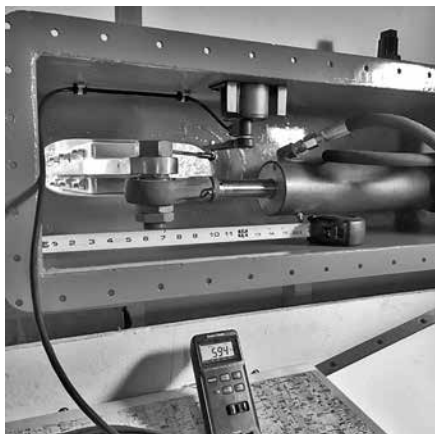
*Helge's* steering system uses a manual Wagner B-3 helm pump and their N80-190 cylinder (49 cubic inches). A Jastram DARB-10 (double acting relief bypass valve) provides a bypass for emergency steering and overpressure relief. The tubing is  $\frac{5}{8}$ " OD copper with a working pressure of 1,000psi. All fittings are high pressure JIC 37° flares. This setup supplies 2,000 ft torque over 2x35° rudder angle at 500psi system pressure. This higher than normal torque is necessary to control *Helge's* barn door rudder. We affixed a sight glass reservoir to the helm pump for easy level inspection.

The autopilot is a ComNav Commander P2. It drives a TeleFlex PF 4.6 variable flow pump. The 6" Dirigo compass has iron correcting spheres and is externally gimballed.

The rudder cylinder is mounted inside a hefty steel box welded to the transom. The assembly is sealed with an O-ringed  $\frac{1}{2}$ " Lexan cover. This cover allows for quick visual inspection without compromising the box's integrity. Although the cylinder is mounted inside the boat, it is virtually mounted outside due to its watertight enclosure. Wagner has assured me that this location will not affect the cylinder's performance or its warranty.







## The House Bank

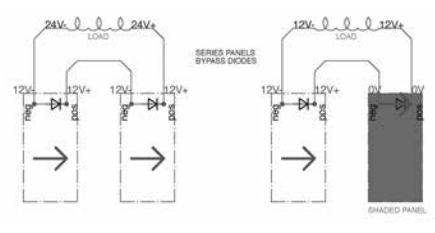
*Helge's* house bank consists of four Firefly OASIS-G31 batteries. The bank's capacity is 460 amp hours and weighs 300lbs. Firefly batteries use a Microcell Foam Grid structure which makes them highly resistant to sulfation. Firefly claims 3,600 cycles at 50% discharge. They also claim that repeated charging to only 80% will not sulfate the plates. No other lead acid battery can take such abuse. This will give *Helge* 220 useable amp hours between charges. If our 240 watt solar array isn't sufficient, we can quickly charge the bank to 80% with our John Deere's 200 amp Balmar alternator (without the need to enter a time wasting absorption phase).

Instead of equalization, OASIS batteries need an occasional restoration charge. This is done by charging the bank to 14.4v at 0.6 amps each, then discharging to 10.5v and recharging back to 14.4v-0.6 amp absorption. This will restore the batteries back to their original capacity or more.

The solar array is regulated by a Blue-Solar MPPT controller (Maximum Power Point Tracing). Programming voltages and viewing history are done through the navigation iPad via Bluetooth dongle. Custom programming is necessary as the OASIS batteries require a lower than normal float value of 13.4v and a higher than normal temperature compensation of 24mv/C.

The bank is housed inside the forward cabin's island. A Lexan tool drop shield protects the positive connections. The boat's positive and negative leads connect to the bank at opposite ends (ensuring that each battery feeds through an equal number of jumpers). An older model Link-10 is used to monitor the bank.

Edit: We have since upgraded the bank's monitor to a LinkPRO. This allows us to cross connect during an emergency start directly through the bank's 1,000 amp shunt.



### 12V G31 BATTERY

Enduring	12V	100% to 90%	Watt to 300W
Normal Voltage	12V		
Max Charge Voltage	14.4V		
Max Charge Current	250A		
Internal Resistance	3.8 mΩ		
Self-Discharge	2 years		
Self-Discharge	<2%/month		
Temperatures	Low	High	
Operation	-20°C / -4°F	50°C / 122°F	
Storage	-30°C / -22°F	50°C / 122°F	
Weights & Dimensions			
Length	13.6in / 345mm		
Height	9.6in / 245mm		
Width	6.8in / 173mm		
Weight	7.8lb / 35.3kg		
Volume	65.5 to 67.9 ltr		
Construction	5.8 - 18 LHC		
Terminal Configuration	PPCF		
Case/Color	PPCF		

### Discharge Rates to 1.75 VPC \*

Hours	Amperes	Watts
3	30.5	91.5
10	11	132
20	5.8	116
		139

### Estimated Life

RV & Marine	5 - 10 years
Boats & Yachts	3 - 5 years
Powering Vehicles	3 - 5 years
Defense & Mining	5 years
Hotel Load	4 - 5 years

### Battery Life \*

DOODN	Cycles
30	2,000
50	3,800
80	1,000

### Charge Temperature Compensation

Operating Temperature	°C	-20	-5	10	25	40	55
°F		-4	23	50	77	104	131
Absorption Charge Voltage		15.48	15.12	14.76	14.4	14.04	13.68

Infrared images snapped at the end of a 5C (12 minute) discharge of both a Firefly cell and a traditional cell.

More uniform temperature distribution, as the Carbon Foam is thermally conductive, means:

- Uniform current density distribution
- Higher overall active material utilization
- Less localized positive grid corrosion
- Less localized positive active material wear out

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## *Newsletter, July 2020.*

First, I hope that everyone is weathering these difficult times in good health. Congratulations to family and friends in New Zealand and Slovenia and other countries where you have brought COVID-19 under control. We are fortunate here in Maine, where rates of infection are relatively low, and where life is getting back to some semblance of normal. Unfortunately it's not that way in most of the rest of the country. Our plans for trips to New Zealand and Slovenia are on hold. I suspect that it will be a long time yet before we can travel.

In the special edition of my newsletter in March this year, I suggested that I might offer model kits of some of my designs. I got quite a good response to this - thank you to those who expressed interest. Since then, however, I have been busy building a Penobscot 13, which was taken by the owner to Camden, Maine a week ago, and I am now starting another one. One way and another I have not been able to give much thought to model kits. Maybe next winter I will be able to revisit the idea.

In the meantime, Stefan Ovan sent this photo of the model he is building of a Bay Pilot 18. The construction is exactly the same as the real thing - it's clear that he is doing some very precise work. The scale is 1:6. He was planning to move to the Philippines, and to build the full size boat there - the model is intended to reveal any issues that might arise. His project has been complicated by the pandemic, including his wife being unable to return from a visit there.



There have been a number of launchings this spring. Jeff Marchant launched his Penobscot 17 on Lake Ontario at the end of May. He writes, "It was 56 years to the month after my Dad launched the first boat he built, so I gave him the honor of taking the helm (he's 85 and still fit and healthy). The boat sails well and I am pleasantly surprised by how well it handles heavy weather and waves. It was a great fun project, the design, plans and your instructions were all excellent. I made a lot of my own fittings on my lathes and milling machine. Marsha and I are using the boat to offer weekly evening cruises and a picnic, with all proceeds going to the local food bank. We are booked for the entire summer."



Robert Connell launched his Penobscot 17 in June. "What a nice boat! Rows like I hoped. My first boat, your building manual and plans were very good. Bought the plans 10? years ago. Finally got to it. Summer in Alaska is flying by, so sheer trim and sail rig for this winter. Made a set of Pete Culler oars for it. I am glad I chose this as my first. Thank you for creating the design for this fine boat."



Early July brought another launching, a Penobscot 14 this time. John Downey launched CONNIE in Port Townsend, WA. "Forecast winds of 25 knots that day, so waiting for next time to raise the sail. Thanks for all you put into this great design, Arch. She glides through the water like a hot knife through butter! Planking is okoume ply. Stringers, keel, inner stem and bulkhead frames are dark red meranti. Outer stem, breasthook, seats, center case, rails are sapele. Mast partner is iroko. Spars and oars are Sitka spruce." The varnished stem facing and trim under the sheer strake are particularly nice touches.



The GRACE EILEEN went into the water on June 10 to start her ninth season. We've had some good sailing in fresh sea breezes. The wind can really pipe up in the afternoon. On my first sail across Penobscot Bay to Holbrook Island, the breeze was very light in the mooring area, so I put up the genoa. The wind soon freshened, and I had a great sail for the first couple of miles towards Turtle Head, with the sheets just eased. But soon we were overcanvassed, so I took in a reef. In the eastern part of the bay it freshened further, and a mile or so short of the anchorage I dropped the genoa, and continued under just the reefed main. The wind also went ahead somewhat, but I made the entrance without tacking. I have to say, it's great to have a boat that will go to windward so well under just the mainsail. Less heeling, light on the helm, and good visibility without a headsail.



If you are thinking of ordering a Penobscot 13, don't leave it too long. I have just started one, which will be a bare hull for the owner to finish. I expect to have it done in September. I could then start on another one, which I could have finished for launching next spring.

Take care, and be well. These difficult times will come to an end, and in the meantime we can be safe in our shops and on the water!





## Princess Anne Updatet

*Princess Anne* is coming along a little too fast because when she's finished I'll just have to start another one and I've been terrible at doing "smaller ones."



There will be some kind of decoration around the edge at the top, maybe a vine of some kind. For those of you who forgot, this is one is 23' long and 7½' wide.



Still needs a lot of touch up and painting and an interior, but the hardest part is finished. And what was the hardest part you ask? Putting the roof on. There's only 6" of clearance under the shop roof beams along with all of the crap stored up there over the

## From the Tiki Hut

By Dave Lucas

years and 1" of dust consisting of mostly fiberglass. I did try to sort it out it but quickly got totally grossed out so I threw everything up there in the burn pit (which shows how good it was) and turned the hose on it all. It was really fun watching all that gunk washing down and it made painting the top way more fun. No, it won't fit out under the roof, the little shed roof at the back will have to come off.

I think the uprights will be dark brown to match the wicker furniture that she'll have. Can't have an *African Queen* looking boat with a regular interior, got to have style. She'll probably end up with a smoke stack, *Helen Marie* had one with a smoke maker inside.



There's a 20hp Suzuki outboard hiding in that coffin looking thing back there. Haven't decided on the rub rail color yet.



The stripe under the rub rail is bright red matching the boot stripe. The top is strong enough to stand on and jump off of if you're a kid at heart. It has nonskid on it. I could have finished this one six months ago if I was more like Howard or Lonnie like I usually am, but it's been fun thinking of ways to make it better and different.



For those who know there is simply nothing better than messing about in small boats.

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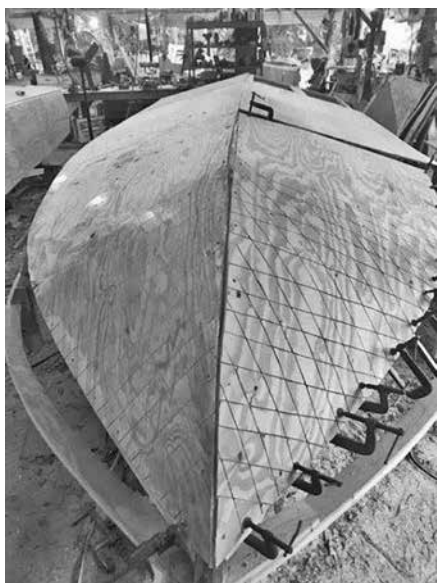
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Here's an update on Richards "Party Barge." That's its real name from Glen-L. These pictures will give you some idea of the size of the thing. It might look simple to build and it does after it's all together, but let me tell you it was a real killer. See, you just nail some boards together and then just screw some plywood on top of them, nothing to it and it doesn't look that big to me. Bending plywood in two different directions at the same time is no problem, especially since it's made to not bend at all.



## Richard's Party Barge

By Dave Lucas

Nice job Rich, side and bottom paint on and ready to flip over. The rafters in this shed are 8' high and the boat won't fit under them when on its side. We did manage to get a low dolly under it to pull out to the sky hook tree.



Maybe it's bigger than I thought. I'm 6' tall and Richard is 6'4" and this thing towers over us all, it's 8 1/2' wide and 20' long. That means if Richard is standing next to it the edge will be 2' above his head.



This is not even all of the finished hull. See those frames sticking up from the edge? That's where the rest of the side goes on but it'll be a lot easier to put those on with the boat upright. He made the hull super strong, more so than the plans call for. All of the plywood is preglased and the bottom is two layers of 3/8" ply with a layer of glass in the middle.



The bow won't really look like this since it's a "deck boat," the next part will extend over this pointed front to make sort of a squarish aircraft carrier looking shape like this. The sides not on yet are the ones above the white. I told you it was going to be a big-ass boat. It's real name from Glen-L is "Party Boat." Why do some of us keep choosing big projects? Sure is a fine looking boat.







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Working on the raffle boat, experienced volunteers steam and fit planks to the Catspaw building frame.



## THE EAST END CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY

A Different Sort of Summer  
Reprinted from the East End Classic Boat Society Newsletter



Work restoring a donated guide canoe has begun, first with a thorough scrub and then starting to repair damage to the bow. The new shed gives us another space in which to work



Boat kits for the school program are prepared and packed up, hopefully to be used next spring when area schools are in session.



Work continues on the launch.



We are glad to see that last year's raffle boat and the *Sea Pearl* that we sold this spring are being well crewed. The raffle boat rowers are twins Allie and Georgie DeBaise.



Currently we have the Newman Grass River racing canoe for sale.

All of this year's events are cancelled but we are healthy, busy and moving forward. Stop by, we would like to see you, just wear a mask and keep a distance.

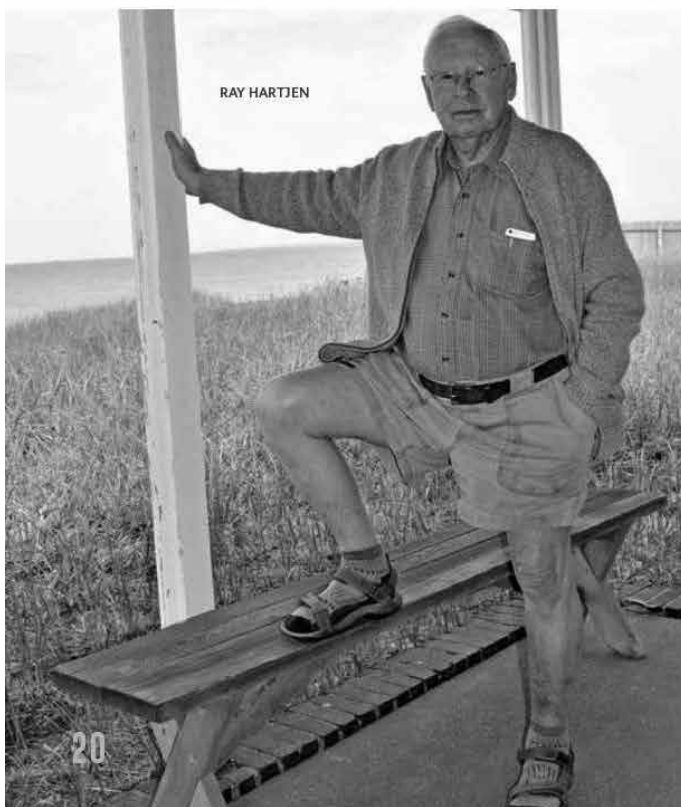


# MASTER CRAFTSMAN



The East End Boat Society at work

## MASTER CRAFTSMAN RAY HARTJEN, EAST END CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY



RAY HARTJEN

COURTESY RAY HARTJEN

*Days precious days  
They roll in and out like waves  
I got boards to bend, I got planks to nail  
I got charts to make, I got seas to sail  
I'm gonna build me a boat  
With these two hands  
It'll be a fair curve  
From a noble plan  
Let the chips fall where they will  
'Cause I've got boats to build  
—"Boats to Build" by Guy Clark*

"It's a lot of hammering and nailing."

There is a romance, without question, to a wooden boat, something that inspires songwriters as much as sailors. It is a feeling conjured by the image of a vintage vessel on the sea, but as East End Classic Boat Society president Ray Hartjen's words suggest, the foundation of that feeling lies in the hands-on skill, the time and dedication of an artisan to bring that romantic vision to life.

A lot of hammering and nailing.  
And a lot of history and passion.

Water and the vessels that take us upon it are among the few aspects of Long Island life that seamlessly connect past, present and future. Hartjen and his fellow aficionados remain dedicated to preserving the unique art of creating boats not merely in the manner of generations before us, but in the spirit. Just over two decades ago, the society was established to celebrate the traditions and skills of classic boat making—design, construction, maintenance, seamanship—while welcoming both experienced shipwrights and novices alike.

It begins with the wood. A craftsman is only as good as their materials, some might say, and those used to create these boats are "very specific," Hartjen notes. Such is the challenge inherent in using

*Continued on page 22*



THE EAST END CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY PAINSTAKINGLY WORKS TO BUILD THE VESSELS AND TREATS THEM LIKE WORKS OF ART

HUGH PATRICK BROWN

traditional methods toward an end result that will be held to the highest of standards.

Locally, the society members use a harvested white oak for the ribs of the boat when available. Hand-dried lumber is preferred over kiln-dried. The seats are all mahogany. "The most interesting wood to work with is Atlantic white cedar that comes out of the Panhandle of Florida," says Hartjen. This particular wood travels north to the Liberty Cedar sawmill in Rhode Island, and twice a week they come out to the East End to deliver it to the society.

"These planks are so impressive," Hartjen admires. "Some of them can be as much as 20 to 24 inches wide and clear of knots. It's one of the most beautiful woods you can think of."

The society orders the wood with extra thickness, twice as thick as they need, then use a pattern and split the wood in half. "A very unique feature of our boat building is that every plank and every boat built is book-matched," says Hartjen. "The grain on one side of the boat matches the grain on the other side of the boat. I don't believe anybody else in the country is doing that level of sophistication."

It all takes place at the Hartjen-Richardson Community Boat Shop in Amagansett. "The East End Classic Boat Society existed in the '90s, and they were always looking for a place to build their boats," says Hartjen. Members were working in spaces from Sag Harbor to Springs when they decided it was time to a rent space.

"The town had this land next to the Marine Museum," Hartjen recalls. He made the presentation to the town and the rest, as they say, is history. The Hartjen-Richardson Community Boat Shop was built in 2008, quickly evolving into a place where the craftsmanship goes hand-in-hand with a dedication to community.

"If you come to the boat shop any Wednesday or Saturday, you'll find the parking lot jammed with cars. These are all senior citizens. Many come without any boat-building skills," says Hartjen, noting that they are "thrilled to have an opportunity to interact socially and to learn boat building skills."

The society also has created an education program, headed by Stuart Close, with middle and elementary school students in Montauk, Amagansett, Springs and East Hampton—building tiny sail boats that the kids assemble and sail in local waters. "To make that happen," Hartjen explains, "we have people around the shop that are building these little marvel boats day in and day out."

As a way of raising funds to continue its work while sharing their craft with the East End, each year the society raffles off one of its creations—a 12' to 13' classic wooden rowing and sailing boat that takes 8 to 10 months of shaping and pounding to build. Raffle tickets have traditionally been sold at a number of sites and fairs across East End throughout the summer and fall, and the lucky winner gets a piece of one-of-a-kind artwork that is both beautiful and usable.

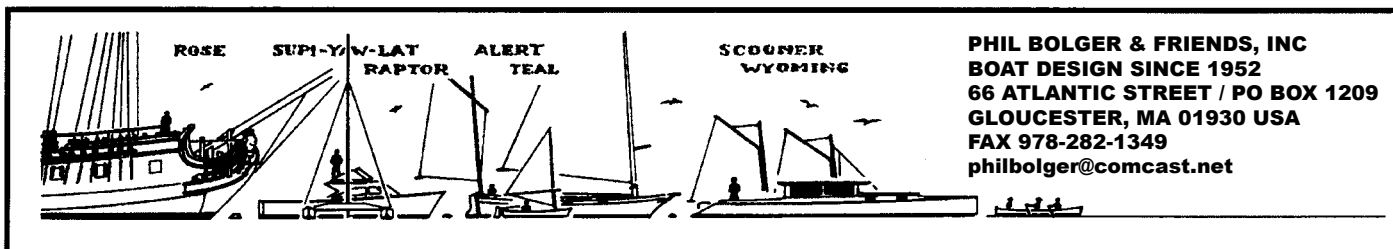
"We have this \$8,000 to \$10,000 boat with trailer and sails that we essentially give away to somebody that may have bought a \$5 raffle ticket," says Hartjen. "Over the course of 10 to 12 years, we have that many boats out and around East Hampton."

Although this year the "raffle is on hold because we're dependent on the venues" as points of sale, says Hartjen, the mission of the society goes on, and so does the support. Many community members donate boats that can be restored by the society and resold to offset costs. "In this time when we don't have income from the raffle tickets, because we have ongoing expenses, we're selling boats on the side," says Hartjen.

When COVID-19 hit, the society shut its doors to members for a few months, but they are back open now, although operating cautiously. Everyone wears masks, all doors and windows remain open, and members practice social distancing. Their craft requires a communal approach, but it is one that has always been rooted in patience, in a precise approach and knowing how to take old practices and make them work in changing times. Keep hammering and nailing and carrying the past into the future. They've got boats to build.

— Jessica Mackin-Cipro





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## Phil Bolger & Friends on Design

Design Column #551 in MAIB  
 Design #503 (aluminum) Sea Bird '86  
 Design #525 (plywood) Sea Bird '86  
 23'0" x 7'9" x 2'6" x 276sf/282sf x 4150lbs  
 Long Keel Dipping Lugger/Gaff Sloop

Part 3 of 5

### Building Her in 1:1 Scale

Phil only said it few times in print, but he took great pride in the type of folks his body of work seemed to attract. Without global advertising by him, folks from all sorts of places, time zones and climates would find his address here in Gloucester, Massachusetts, US" on the envelope. Phil published his first national piece in the *Rudder* in March 1948, with then many hundreds since, and self motivated folks read these articles and, since 1972 his six books, and over time self educated themselves by comparing options within Phil's own work, and his many cohorts and predecessors offering their thinking. Then some determined folks took the next step to build one or several types. Such stories came from just about every continent. So here is this case from Chile in South America.

With its implausibly narrow geographical footprint on South America's Pacific coastline and its impossible to precisely measure length of complex Pacific Ocean coastline of some 2,900 miles as the albatross soars, with a much more elaborate inland saltwater shoreline, an exhausting mix of exposed and sheltered cruising waters on that continent with a broad spectrum of climate and vegetation, Magellan Strait is one passage that might come to mind. In boat design terms, between Pacific Ocean waters and the eastern border with Argentina and Bolivia, Chile, may have on average a very lean length to beam ratio of some 15:1.

If you follow Chile's governmental ambitions, a good chunk of the Antarctic should be open to your boating ambitions as well under Chilean flag with much more coastal water east and west of the substantial peninsula jutting from the Antarctic continent some 600 miles south of the southernmost islands around Cape Horn. Cruising Chile in a boat you've built would suggest having both a sober set of priorities when choosing design attributes and then an even more determined focus on building her to match the particulars of your projected cruising waters.

To get this straight immediately, no, Seabird '86 is not intended for the extremes of Antarctic waters or even plowing through Patagonia ice fields. But after his smaller day boat types offered him necessary experience, David's self assessment of what size project seemed doable, along with his sense of conservative design attributes for his intended cruising into remote waters, resulted in his

particular compromise of competing factors to which he would commit his energy and resources. Here is what David shared about his thinking around the idea of boat building a while back as he was immersed in the construction of his plywood Seabird '86:

"I enjoy building almost as much as sailing. I live/work two hours by car from my nearest sailing area and therefore enjoy boat building as the second half of the therapy. I enjoy working on my boats and other peoples'. Building allows me to dream and scheme and extend the reality of boats and boating. It also provides a fantastic opportunity for father/son interaction with sharing skills, time and friendship an important part of it.

Many of my friends at the yacht club are surprised that my son (now coming up 17) still regularly will come sailing/building/working with me. I believe building has a lot to do with it. In a time when time is money and personal relationships are changing, spending time on a big father/son project is a privilege which few people enjoy these days.

We are currently building a 23' Sea Bird 86 which follows in the footsteps of an Oldshoe, a Nymph (converted to Reuben's Nymph), a Zephyr and a Skimmer as well as a small Mouse by Gavin Atkin. So I confess I may be biased towards building.

I would suggest that building a smaller simple boat to develop the skills is a great starting point. It can be discouraging to have 40 sheets of plywood waiting to be made into a boat in your front yard. Building takes time and dedication (as well as space).

I think Jim Michalak is right when he says it really is not (economically) worth designing/building boats over 25' or so unless you are looking for something very particular because there are so many second-hand boats out there for sale at far less than the cost of building (and with a good chance of performing as well or better).

However, I believe this analysis misses a point or I wouldn't be building Seabird '86. In a day when we are used to instant gratification and buying what we want now, boat building allows a contact with the past where we have to work hard and wait for the project to mature. Nothing compares with the feeling of sailing/using something you made yourself.

When you build a boat it carries your personality. It may be perfectly finished or workboat standard, it may be aesthetically

conservative or completely open minded. It will definitely always be partly you.

I have repaired and worked on many boats but I know my own from stem to stern and from keel to masthead. I am therefore confident I know what I can do and what I can't.

I can like a fiberglass boat but there is no connection. With a wooden boat you build yourself there is a connection which you can enjoy.

I don't worship my boats. They are to be used and if they are damaged they can be repaired or end their days as flowerpots (as my Zephyr is now doing). It may sound a waste of money but if you enjoy the building and the using and the sharing there is nothing wrong with building cheap semi disposable wooden boats. I went super cheap on Zephyr and the Skimmer. Zephyr did five years for under US\$200 in materials with ten days' work over a vacation period while Skimmer cost just two sheets of 3/8" standard WBP pine plywood, a few bits of wood, glue, paint and nails from a small local hardware store. It took my then 12-year-old son four days partial labor with some help from his friends from buying the materials to being on the water.

The only real expense with the Skimmer was the 9.8 hp Tohatsu which will power the Seabird '86 once we finish her. The Skimmer has served as a platform to teach windsurfing, rescued sailboats, used as a general runabout as well as being greatly enjoyed both by users and bystanders alike.

I believe building boats develops your skills, your patience, your personality and your sense of humor as well as giving you something productive on which to expend the energy that you might otherwise be wasting or using in more self destructive ways. Building boats reconnects you with simple technology, time honored skills and knowledge.

So no, I don't build boats because it makes economic sense. I build boats because I enjoy it, because I enjoy making things and expanding the skill set. I enjoy seeing a project develop from plan to 3D and I enjoy the privilege of using it afterwards. But most of all, I build boats because it is an expression of who I am who builds bridges with other people that no fiberglass boat would ever do.

I agree with Thomas Fleming Day's principle, "All hands build boats," but I also believe in the KISS principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid!). Start small and then get more adventurous. A finished boat is a joy. A half finished boat encumbers an estate and can become a serious bone of contention."

Obviously, Phil would have really enjoyed reading this and a lot of readers of *MAIB* can relate to David's perspective and may even draw sustenance from his words. It's all part of a much larger culture of getting things done, things you'd otherwise would not have or might actually not be found in the marketplace at all, not to mention David's emphasis on the multilayered personal experience and life enhancing satisfaction of having done this work yourself.

Hence the all the publications and communities around building things, tiny houses or kit cars, V-twin choppers and light helicopters, hunting cabins or off the grid lifestyles and so on. Ergo over 37 years of *MAIB*! However, Phil, then he and I, and now I, would point out that a good number of the 680+ designs in our archive came to be because a given client's particular wish list could not be met in the new or used boat market. Some requirements were mildly unusual, and others well out of the mainstream with a complex set of reasons driving the custom design.

Next to no modern power or sail production cruisers could plausibly be used for four season liveaboard purposes here in New England, having design flaws for what they cost new and, when bought used, still dictating either getting chased south or forcing a second base to live in after all, this one on land, two places to maintain and pay for.

In contrast, we have lived aboard our *Resolution* for many fulltime years where we saw -20°C and +30°C or -5°F and +100°F, solidly frozen in two to three months and then the other nine plus months riding the tides twice a day, including that grounding out for which that 48' single screw motorsailer was designed.

Then there is the near monoculture of towering Bermudian sloop rigs on just about every sailing cruiser that prohibit shooting bridges and finding bad weather refuge way up in the estuary, quite apart from never allowing any on deck masthead work. There is really no good reason technically for this, except to produce yard crane fees to swap out that light bulb or check the VHF antenna. And all that stuff is an awful liability in a gale, whether on her mooring or on that cruise.

Or the ubiquitous lumpy hull shape of the vast majority of power cruisers, even so called passagemakers, whose outsized drive trains are typically astonishingly complex to take to remote places and burn far more fuel than you'd want to actually cruising those distances.

For contrast, 16 ton heavy motorsailer *Resolution* did near hull speed at 8.9 knots with just a hand starting Norwegian SABB two cylinder 22hp Diesel. All that narrow set of conceptual dictates limitations in a time where every other part of our lives benefits from ever expanding diversities of options and thus opportunities to match the tools for our life as closely as possible to our personal needs.

Hence the many types of hull geometries, materials, propulsion types, budgets, utility reflected just in our *MAIB* design columns alone. Some things you simply can't buy no matter your budget. Only a dedicated well integrated design may match your needs, from an arctic liveaboard survival machine twin screw gaff sloop for the Mackenzie River system or a power passagemaker that smoothes an Atlantic crossing to then duck into the French canal system specified and dug by Napoleon with all its low bridges, tight and

narrow tunnels and lock chamber limitations to link France's two coastlines across a rather hilly interior to connect with Europe via the Moselle to the Rhine, or Danube, etc.

The many not so ambitious needs addressed by more mainstream affordable designs, are structures buildable by the so-called amateur since, once you are done, you sure are not an amateur on that type and construction method anymore. So, after this recent self excited blip of some Maker Culture meeting in Maker Spaces to make things, or whatever, has come and gone, what remains is the rich and ancient can do culture driven by needs and motivations to do your own thing, to your budget and to your own rewards.

Thus this particular Seabird '86 boat building project somewhere in the seven million metropolitan area of Chile's capital Santiago, nearly halfway north/south in that 17 million people country, perhaps some two traffic hours from the Pacific coast at Valparaiso. David and son had decided to go with the dipping lug rig, along with the doghouse option. The images of the dipping lugger version and general arrangements are from the rich pictures file David sent via a data dump of e-mails, a selection of key stages of this work.

You'll notice the urban setting of the project, leveraging driveway, backyard and what seems a de facto permanent semi transparent rain shelter apparently not requiring heavy snowload considerations for perhaps 2" of snow.

1. Every boat building project starts with a stack of materials, the height of which suggesting the upfront commitment to the project. Here are first outlines for the first hull frame pieces to be cut out.



2. The growing set of frames and bulkheads.



3. Assembly of her keel, including the hollow for the 1100lbs leadkeel.



4. Inserting the keel casting into the keel structure.



5. Good use of the level asphalt drive-way to cut out and assemble her hull bottom plate.



6. Here the hull reinforcement around the inboard rudder stock, ready to be set on to the hull bottom plate.



7. Installing that bottom plate right side up on top of that keel assembly. The project will be rolled on both her sides several times for detailing, glassing and painting, however, never rotating through a full 180°.



8. A first fitting of her stem and the bow bulkhead.



9. Over that backbone now the frames, with fore and aft deck frames already cut.



10. With the hull skeleton plumb and trued every which way, here a first outlining of her topsides. The plans come with that panel expansion well defined, but testing matters on the actual hull in 1:1 scale always seems comforting before committing to cutting that 1/2" plywood. After all, David had gathered his share of experience building a number of smaller types.



11. Here the three topsides ply pieces being butt jointed in the driveway.



12. With both sides' topsides in place on the hull, the bilge panels actually do need defining on the hull since not defined on the plans. Design #503/525 were done before the age of handy inhouse PC based computer aided design support, meaning some panels remain to be defined on the hull. Some folks would be tempted to use junky light 1/8" ply to make that pattern. Dave and crew only used the final 1/2" thick hull material.



13. The port bilge panel being pulled into place at the bow, the act of actually closing in her hull, indeed making her a boat, almost.



14. A first laying of her deck beams.



15. With a first general dry fitting of her foredeck, even less doubt for the neighbors that this project is moving along steadily. As to the background, at some 1,800' elevation, Santiago de Chile is surrounded on most sides by substantial mountain ridges of 4,000', 6,000' and even 8,000'.





16. Next the dry fitting her deck structure along with the first uses of the companionway.



17. Fiberglassed and receiving her first coat of paint. The mast tabernacle is in place already.



18. Rudder almost ready to be fitted, except that that may have to wait until she is high on her trailer.



19. A first structural test of the mast lamination.



20. Detailing the stick, here with stainless steel pivot pin reinforcements screwed to the mast with lots of screws.



21. Another test of her ergonomics when you can still adjust things.



22. The hull may be closed in, painted and the structure all complete, seemingly ready to hit the water, except that there are lists of details to be tallied off, including electrics, some plumbing, deck hardware, and, of course, matters of cruising comfort such as bunks, galley, etc. So, no, we are not done yet discussing this project. But this was plenty for one good reading.



A Bolger boat built by an experienced father and son team somewhere amidst the urban realities of seven million people in the capital of Chile. More to discuss and study in the next issue.

Plans for Design #525 plywood Seabird '86 consisting of nine sheets featuring all versions are available for \$300 from:

Phil Bolger & Friends, 66 Atlantic St, Gloucester, MA 01930-1627

## Another Seabird Project

I noticed in the August issue that the Bolger and Friends column concerns the Sea Bird and its influence on a design. Several years ago I started building a Sea Bird (I have built other boats). As retirement approached I intended to complete the project. Unfortunately illness struck and has prevented me from completing her. I am forced to give her away. Her hull with deck and cabin of epoxy-sheathed plywood is complete and stored in a barn in Connecticut. I would be grateful if you would pass along this offer.

Clark Crolius, (203) 619-3678, clarkson.crolius@gmail.com

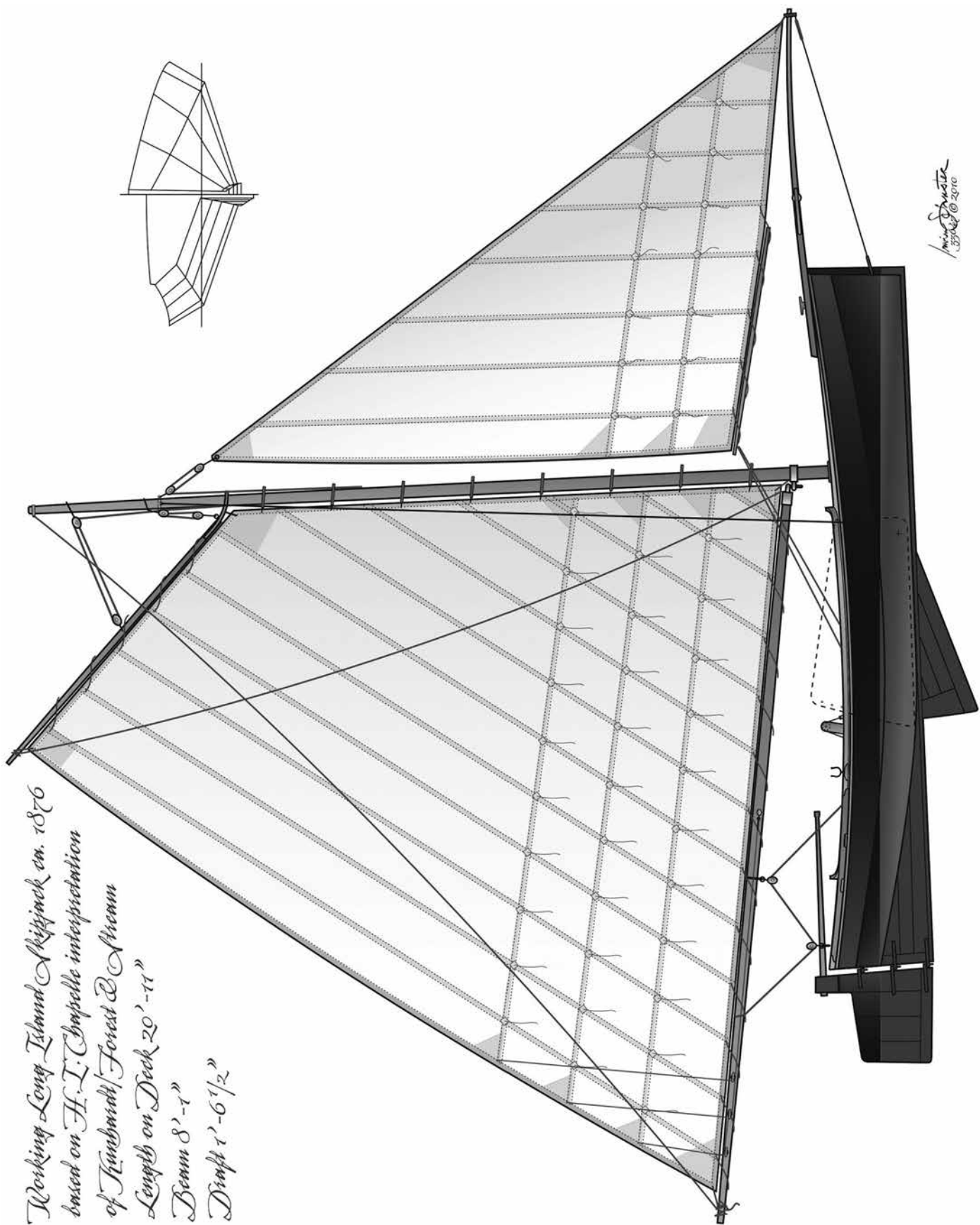
## Thomas Fleming Day and His Seabird Yawl

The original *Seabird* was built by Thomas Fleming Day, Founder and Editor of the *Rudder*. She was a gaff yawl rig, 26'x8'6"x4' chine hull. She was the first small yacht ever to cross the Atlantic in 1911 when he and Frederick B. Thurber and Theodore R. Goodwin sailed across in. Her trip from New York to Rome and her best day's run was 165 miles in 24 hours.



Frederick B. Thurber, Theodore Goodwin and Thomas Fleming Day, the first small yacht trans Atlantic crew of *Seabird* in 1911 ready to cross the Atlantic.

Thomas Fleming Day (1861-August 19, 1927) was a sailboat designer and sailboat racer. He was the first to win the annual New York to Bermuda race. The T.F. Day Trophy is named for him. He was born in Somerset, England, in March 1861, emigrated with his parents to the United States when he was a young boy and was brought up on Long Island Sound. In 1890 he founded *The Rudder*, "a monthly journal devoted to aquatic sport and trade," which he edited until April 1916. He died on August 19, 1927, in Harlem, New York. Day was inducted into the National Sailing Hall of Fame on November 9, 2019.



## Small Craft Illustration #23 by Irwin Schuster

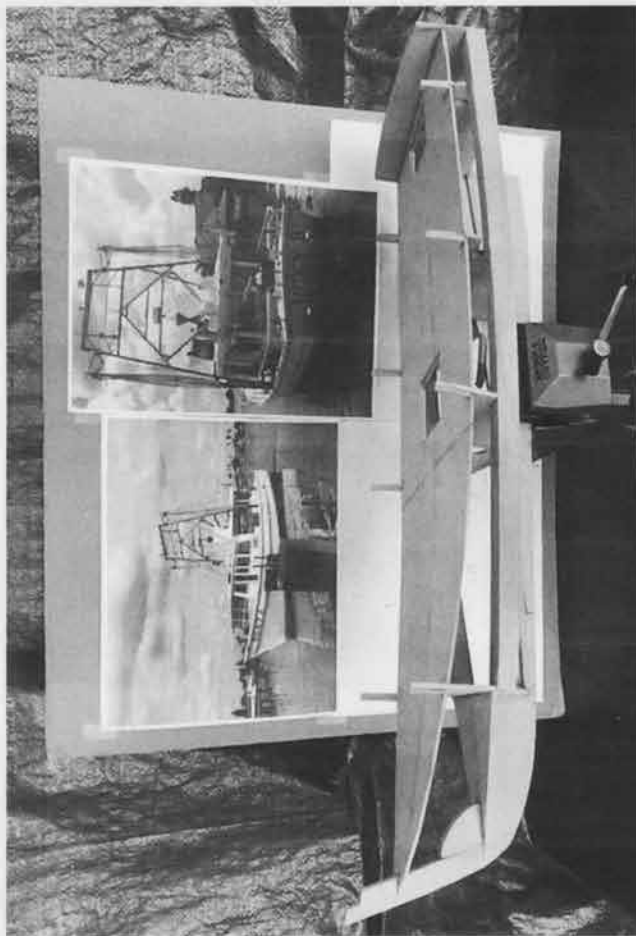
irwinschuster@verizon.net



**Captain Howard Howe on Rickey B, a local fisherman:** "I was discussing the *Captain Jim Crab Boat Model* with a long time friend several months ago, and now I have another static display custom boat model to start while waiting the deck and engine cover details to finish the crab boat.

The *Rickey B* is a 47' fishing boat out of Madeira Beach that is owned by a couple that I have dove and spearfished with over the years. After getting the history on the boat and a visit for measurements and photos, I started looking for a model kit that could be used for correct shape of the hull. The *MIDWEST Maine Lobster Boat, Kit No 953* was a good candidate, but the kit was discontinued. After some on line searching, I was able to locate and purchase a virgin kit that had been sitting since 1986. The scale of the model will be approximately 1/25.

While the hull shape is similar, the decking, cabin, and the work area are very different. The fishing boat has a raised walk around deck with hand railing. The keel in the kit was useable but the frames and deck had to be modified as shown in the photos. After more sanding and shaping, the next step is the planking with balsa wood sheets and eventually I will fiberglass the hull!"



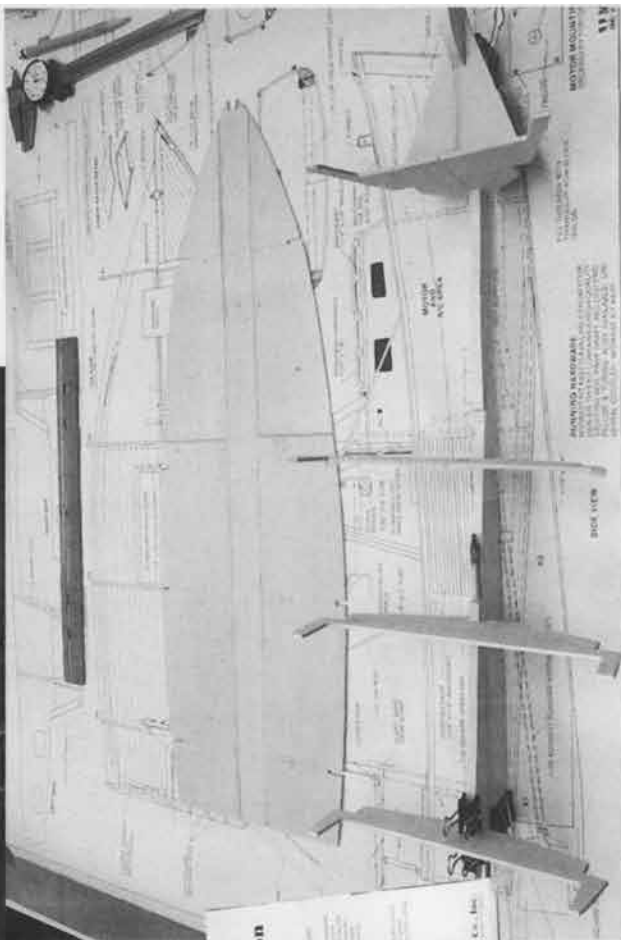
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## The Maine Lobster Boat Features Simplified Plank-On-Frame Construction

• An Authentic Scale Model • All Wood Kit • Adaptable to Radio Controls



The Maine Lobster Boat is a 47' fishing boat out of Madeira Beach that is owned by a couple that I have dove and spearfished with over the years. After getting the history on the boat and a visit for measurements and photos, I started looking for a model kit that could be used for correct shape of the hull. The *MIDWEST Maine Lobster Boat, Kit No 953* was a good candidate, but the kit was discontinued. After some on line searching, I was able to locate and purchase a virgin kit that had been sitting since 1986. The scale of the model will be approximately 1/25.





The monthly marine publications I receive are full of interesting items and information on the marine scene. Some issues have good news and some have bad news for the maritime environment. The July issue of *Maritime Reporter and Engineering News* on the situation of maritime crews stuck on their ships with no chance to get off the ship or make crew changes shows a problem with coping with COVID-19. Then there is the growing problem of lithium ion battery fires aboard ships (commercial and private). Reportedly one yacht was lost from fires caused by runaway lithium ion battery fires in the RV vehicles stored on board. Then there is the August issue of *Practical Sailor* coverage of inflatable PFD failures. On the good news side is the article the June issue of *Marine News* on "i911" concept using cell phones to contact the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard using the phones' GPS systems to locate the caller.

For a number of years, we had a lift to hold our Sisu 22 out of the water when not in use. It was the vertical forklift model and worked quite nicely most of the time. On one occasion I was raising the boat, with my wife on board, when the aft lift cable snapped. Fortunately we had just retrieved all the inflatable race marks and she fell into the inflated bags and did not suffer major injuries.

After replacing the cable, we were never again on the boat when it was being lowered or raised since I had installed a short float that allowed access to the boat when it was in the water. I also removed the switch that was installed on one of the positioning guide poles when we came back to find that the rising tide had almost reached the switch on the pole. The firm that had installed the lift told us not to have the boat on the lift if there was a tropical storm or hurricane coming as the boat could be damaged by storm surge moving it part way off the lift and/or constant heavy rain could "sink" the boat on the lift if the scuppers plugged for some reason.

When we purchased the Sisu 26, I had the lift removed and a float installed as rebuilding the lift for the larger boat was quite expensive. Considering the cost of the bottom paint and cleaning the bottom and propeller every couple of months in the brine water canal, I am not sure if that was an economical decision.

Our converted whaleboat had limber holes on each side of the keel where the ribs



## From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

were connected. The individual we purchased it from showed me the openings, explained their purpose and how to keep them clean so water entering the bilge area would flow to the low point where the bilge pump was located. Since that time most of my boats have been built with a straight flow from bow to stern with sufficient clearance between the bulkheads and the inside bottom of the boat for the water to flow to the bilge pump area.

However, I have kept the information on the limber hole's purpose and made sure that the few boats we have owned with such openings had sufficient clearance for the water to flow. While I did not need any of the limber hole clearance devices I saw over the years, the use of a small chain that was strung through the holes was probably the easiest to use. You pulled the chain forward and then went to the stern and pulled the chain aft. The motion cleared the limber hole of debris.

With wooden boats there was the problem of not only keeping the limber holes clean but also sealed so water did not seep into the wood through which the openings were created. The owner of the marina where we had the whaleboat serviced had a shaped brush that was used to paint the inside of the limber hole openings when the boat was pulled for bottom work and the bilge dried out. One of his people would go through the boat with this brush and a small can of paint. Each limber hole was painted to seal the wood. I never had rot in those areas so the process must have been successful.

A flat tire on a vehicle or boat trailer can be a problem. Vehicles have jacks designed for that specific model and are simple to use. A trailer flat tire can be another matter altogether. When I was towing a boat trailer I had a special jack in the vehicle that fit under the trailer axle and allowed me to raise that side of the trailer to remove the tire. It was a very

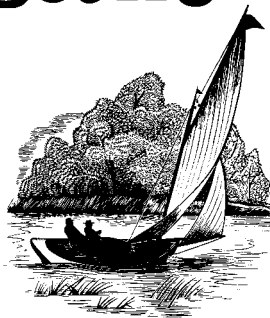
old fashioned screw jack. I used it to lift the axle enough to stick a bottle jack under and complete the process. When the flat tire had been replaced, there was little problem in removing the bottle jack. And, if there was, the screw jack was still available.

I have also seen a "pull forward" device that fit under the axle and when you pulled the trailer forward the device rolled and lifted the axle (and thus the trailer) up enough to get the tire off the ground. Of course, you do not want to lift the tire until you have the bolts loose. The wheels on boat trailers seem to "weld" themselves to the steel behind them. A trick to getting the tire loose is to pull the trailer forward (with the bolts loose) so the moving torque breaks that connection. Rough ground is better for this action than a smooth surface as you want the sideways torque of the wheel to break the connection. Putting on the brakes to cause an inertia "surge" is also helpful. I have also seen a person using a sledgehammer to break the wheel loose, but the roll forward has less tendency to hurt the tire or the rim.

Are you listening to what is being said? Capt Kelly Sweeney's article in the September issue of *Professional Mariner* was on active listening and the need for those receiving instructions to repeat them back to make sure they understood what was being said before any action is taken. When I was still flying, one of the requirements was that a pilot repeated the instructions from ground control or the tower before taking action to make sure the pilot understood what was being required before action was taken. Sometimes ground control was in a hurry but a request to repeat the instructions was not faulted as both the pilot and ground control wanted the plane to be moving safely.

One time I was on a course to a runway that would cross the path of a commercial airliner coming in to land. After looking the situation over, I aborted my landing configuration before informing the tower I was doing so. About the same time I started to abort the landing, the tower came on and told me to abort. I confirmed I was aborting. If I had waited for tower's permission to abort the landing, repeated their instructions and then aborted, things might have come out differently. While repeating what is being said to you on a pleasure boat may seem unnecessary, hearing and understanding what was being said is very important.

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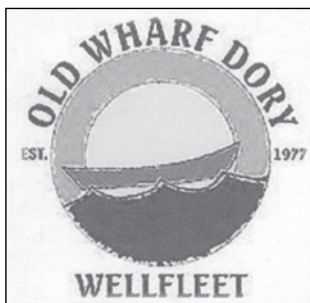


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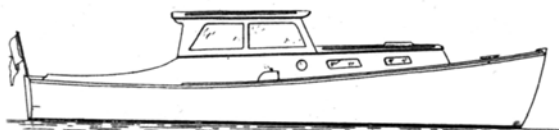
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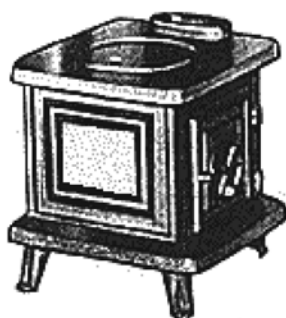
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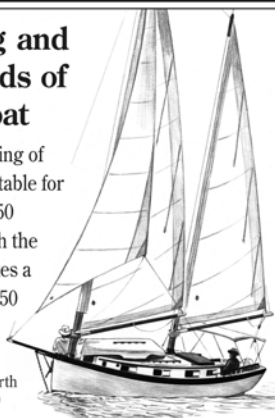
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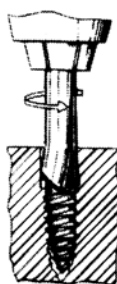
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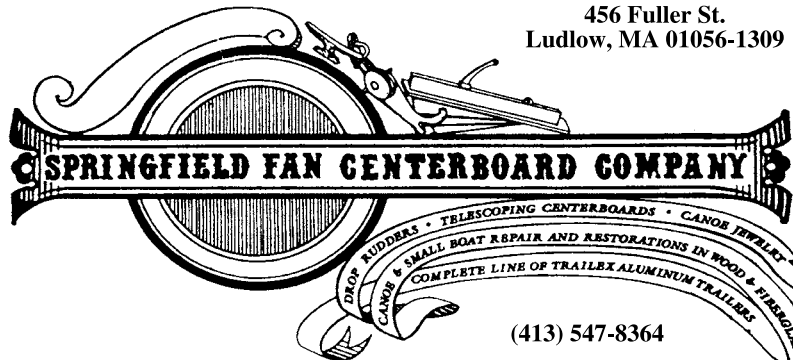
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JOHN SANDUSKY, Rocky Point (LI) NY, [johnsandusky@hotmail.com](mailto:johnsandusky@hotmail.com) (10)



**Old Town Vintage '50s Rowing Canoe**, barn find stored since '70s, in family since new. Double row- ing stations. Glassed by me. 1' of bow rails need replacing, otherwise good bones, no broken ribs, sheathing good. This canoe makes an excellent rough water rowboat, very fast. No oars, lost in the move. \$600.

DICK TATLOCK, Lincoln, MA, [peppermoto@gmail.com](mailto:peppermoto@gmail.com) (10)



**14' Whitehall Rowing Boat**, fg hull, bright sapele & mahogany trim. Set up for single-handed row- ing, rows beautifully, tracks well & stable. New trlr. \$6,500.

BILL ROWE, S. Hero, VT, (802) 363-5450. (10)



**20' Navigator Cruising Dinghy**, '83 Stephen Wilce design in Sealight plastic. Compl w/all ding- hy cruising gear, sails, spars, oars, ground tackle, etc. Stored 25 years, needs cleanup. Rebuilt up- graded highway trlr. \$1,000 w/trlr, \$750 wo/trlr. 3-page detailed design report emailed to you on request. Gotta go by winter or off to the dump!

BOB HICKS, Wenham MA, (978) 774-0906, [maib.office@gmail.com](mailto:maib.office@gmail.com) (10)



**Grumman Sport Boat Improvement**, adapted from design by Robb White, constructed by Henry Champagne in '05. 15' long w/transom for small ob (not incl). Beautiful boat always stored out of the elements, in exc cond. Easily lifted by 2 adults. Asking \$2,500. Please email me at: [Lchampagne@yahoo.com](mailto:Lchampagne@yahoo.com) (8)





**16'5" Swampscott Dory**, built by Rockport Apprentice Shop in '85. Compl w/trlr, main & jib, oars, all lines & fittings, canvas cover. Well maintained, single owner, documented provenance, stored indoors in Sandwich, NH. Professional estate appraisal: \$3600. Reasonable offers invited. Tlr not registered, otherwise, ready to trailer & ready to sail. Inquiries & additional photos at [harding@plymouth.edu](mailto:harding@plymouth.edu).  
NED HARDING, Sandwich, NH (9)



**COMPAC 19'**, '82, (LOA 20', Beam 7', Draft 2') Marconi rigged shoal draft sloop in Bristol cond. New sails: 196sf w/main, jib & genoa; incl new sail/tiller covers. Custom upholstered cabin interior w/4 berths, radio, stove & portable head. "Sun-Brella" cockpit cushions, cockpit tent, compass, depth meter & deck matt. Teak in vy gd cond. Hull treated w/Copper-Poxy bottom paint. Motor: Honda 5hp 4-cycle OB w/vy low time & spare gas tanks. No trlr. A real pocket cruiser, this sloop is a reliable & responsive daysailer & overnigher w/lg dry & comfortable cockpit. It's a heavy boat w/balanced shallow draft keel ideal for the Chesapeake Bay & local tributaries. Other extras incl: Dock lines, 2nd set of sails, cushions, life jackets, etc. \$5,500.  
CARL FERENC, Fallston, MD, (410) 877-3320. (9)

## SAILS & RIGGING FOR SALE

**Polytarp Sail, Mast & Sprit**, used on a Weekend Skiff. Vy usable. \$75.  
GREG GRUNDTISCH, Lancaster, NY, [grundys-woodworks@roadrunner.com](mailto:grundys-woodworks@roadrunner.com) (10)

**Tanbark Sails**, 2 6oz Dacron (fashionably faded) cut for Chapelle designed sharpie in *American Small Sailing Craft*, Gd cond, clean, 20' luff, 10' foot. Incl new teak mast hoops by Pert Lowell Co. \$650 + approx \$50 est shipping.  
FRANCIS RIORDAN, Racine, WI, (262) 812-7324. [riordan1@mail.gtc.edu](mailto:riordan1@mail.gtc.edu) (9)

## GEAR FOR SALE



**Rudder, Tiller, Hardware & C/B**, for a Nutshell Pram, Catspaw, or other type small sailboat. \$95 for all.  
GREG GRUNDTISCH, Lancaster, NY, [grundys-woodworks@roadrunner.com](mailto:grundys-woodworks@roadrunner.com) (10)

**Universal Atomic Four Marine Engine**, Model UJ. Removed from workboat 20 years ago in working cond. Stored indoors. Located lower MI. \$150obo.  
BRIAN BALIUS, Clio, MI, (810) 686-8719, [bee@beeshel.net](mailto:bee@beeshel.net) (10)

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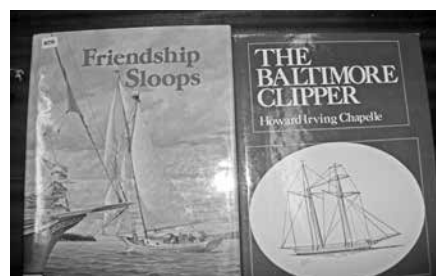


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GREG GRUNDTISCH, Lancaster, NY, [grundys-woodworks@roadrunner.com](mailto:grundys-woodworks@roadrunner.com) (10)

**MAIB History**: My Father's collection of MAIB, V8-14,15,17 and V9-8,9,10,11,12,13,15,16 (1990-1998). Yours for the postage.  
JIM SPOTTS, Atlanta, GA, (770) 216-9514. (9)

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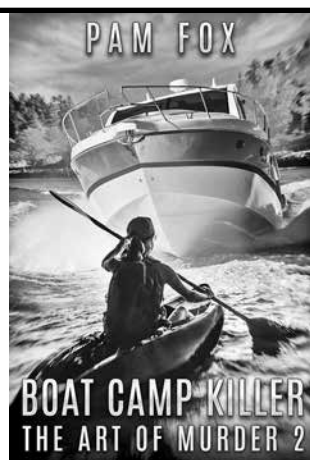
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